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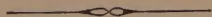
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SCRIPTURE CABINET;

OR

TEXTS AND TRUTHS ILLUSTRATED.

BY ERWIN HOUSE, A. M.



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P R E F A C E .

THE present volume does not profess to be a cyclo-
pedia nor a collection even of religious anecdotes.
Its object is, by fact, illustration, analogy, historical
incident, and narrative, to *apply* such texts of Scrip-
ture as are most intimately related to daily religious
experience. All comprehend that a speaker, who is
happy in the use of an illustration, has a positive
advantage over the bare didactic speaker, however
animated his style, and is able to so affect the mind
of his hearer that long after himself and the details
of his subject are forgotten, some truth uttered in
connection with an incident, not a long-drawn story,
becomes immovably bedded in the memory. It is use-
less for a speaker to ask the attention of an audience
to an hour's talk, no matter how animated it may be,
unless between the two a fire of sympathy is kindled.

A few narratives are given uncondensed, for the
reason that in shortening them the *spiritual processes*,
in which consist their value, would have been lost.

The volume has of design no formal departments.

A double index of articles and subjects will enable the reader readily to turn to any of the topics or texts desired.

It is hoped that not only the minister in his pulpit-ministrations will find the work serviceable, but that the private reader, the Christian man and woman at the fireside, the leader of the class, the prayer and the social meeting, who desire improvement in the spiritual graces, will be in a measure profited by some of the various articles.

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SCRIPTURE CABINET.

THE CRIPPLED ORPHAN OF THE ALPS.

"She hath done what she could." MARK XIV, 8.

A SOLDIER'S widow lived in a little hut, near a mountain village of the Alps. Her only child was a poor cripple. He was a kind-hearted boy. He loved his mother, and would gladly have helped her to bear the burdens of poverty; but his feebleness forbade it. He could not even join in the rude sports of the young mountaineers. At the age of fifteen years he felt keenly the fact that he was useless to his mother and the world.

It was at this period that Napoleon Bonaparte was making his power felt throughout Europe. He had decreed that the Tyrol should belong to Bavaria, and not to Austria, and sent a French and Bavarian army to accomplish his purposes. The Austrians retreated. The Tyrolese resisted valiantly. Men, women, and children of the mountain-land were filled with zeal in defense of their homes. On one occasion ten thousand French and Bavarian troops were destroyed in a single mountain pass, by an immense avalanche of rocks hurled upon them by an unseen foe.

A secret arrangement existed among the Tyrolese, by which the approach of the enemy was to be communicated by signal-fires from village to village, from one mountain height to another; and combustible materials were laid ready to give an instant alarm.

The village in which Hans, the crippled boy, and his mother lived was in the direct line of the route the French

army would take, and the people were full of anxiety and fear. All were preparing for the expected struggle. The widow and her crippled son alone seemed to have no part but to sit still and wait. "Ah, Hans!" she said, one evening, "it is well for us now that you can be of little use; they would else make a soldier of you." This struck a tender chord. The tears rolled from his cheek. "Mother, I am useless," cried Hans in bitter grief. "Look round our village—all are busy, all ready to strive for home and father-land; I am useless."

"My boy, my kind, dear son, you are not useless to me."

"Yes, to you; I can not work for you, can not support you in old age. Why was I made, mother?"

"Hush, Hans," said his mother; "you know these repining thoughts are wrong. You will live to find the truth of our old proverb—

'God has his plan
For every man.'

Little did Hans think that, ere a few weeks had passed, this truth was to be verified in a strange manner.

Easter holidays, the festive season of Switzerland, came. The people lost their fears of invasion in the sports of the season. All were busy in the merry-making—all but Hans. He stood alone on the porch of his mountain hut, overlooking the village.

Toward the close of Easter-day, after his usual evening prayer, in which he breathed the prayer that the Father of mercies would, in his good time, afford him some opportunity of being useful to his mother and to others, he fell into a deep sleep.

He awoke in the night, as if from a dream, under the strong impression that the French and Bavarian army was approaching. He could not shake off this impression; but, with the hope of being rid of it, he arose, hastily dressed himself, and strolled up the mountain path. The

cool air did him good, and he continued his walk till he climbed to the signal-pile. Hans walked round the pile; but where were the watchers? They were no where to be seen, and perhaps they were busied with the festivities of the village. Near the pile was an old pine-tree; and in its hollow stem the tinder was laid ready. Hans paused by the ancient tree; and, as he listened, a singular sound caught his attention, now quickened by the peculiar circumstances in which he found himself, and by the perception that much might depend on him. He heard a slow and stealthy tread, then the click of muskets, and two soldiers crept along the cliff. Seeing no one, for Hans was hidden by the old tree, they gave the signal to some comrades in the distance.

Hans saw instantly the plot and the danger. The secret of the signal-pile had been revealed to the enemy; a party had been sent forward to destroy it; the army was marching to attack the village. With no thought of his own peril, and perhaps recalling the proverb his mother had quoted, he seized the tinder, struck the light, and flung the blazing turpentine brand into the pile.

The two soldiers, whose backs were then turned to the pile waiting the arrival of their comrades, were seized with fear; but they soon saw there were no foes in ambush; only a single youth running down the mountain-path. They fired, and lodged a bullet in the boy's shoulder. Yet the signal-fire was blazing high, and the whole country would be aroused. It was already aroused from mountain-top to mountain-top. The plan of the advancing army was defeated, and a hasty retreat followed.

Hans, faint and bleeding, made his way to the village. The people, with their arms, were mustering thick and fast. All was consternation. The inquiry was everywhere heard, "Who lighted the pile?" "It was I," said at last a faint, almost expiring voice.

Poor crippled Hans tottered among them, saying, "The enemy, the French, was there." He faltered and sank

upon the ground. "Take me to my mother," said he; "at last I have not been useless."

They stooped to lift him. "What is this?" they cried; "he has been shot. It is true; Hans the cripple has saved us." They carried Hans to his mother, and laid him before her. As she bowed in anguish over his pale face, Hans opened his eyes and said, "It is not now, dear mother, you should weep for me; I am happy now. Yes, mother, it is true—

'God has his plan
For every man.'

You see he had it for me, though we did not know exactly what it was."

Hans did not recover from his wound; but he lived long enough to know that he had been of use to his village and his country; he lived to see grateful mothers embrace his mother—to hear that she would be revered and honored in the community which her son had preserved at the cost of his own life.

Great emergencies, like those which met Hans, can not exist in the history of all. To all, however, the Tyrolese motto may speak, and all will experience its truth. None need stand useless members of God's great family. There is work for every one to do, if he will but look out for it. For you, my young reader, need not be a drone in the hive, nor an idler in the Master's vineyard.



THE CAPTIVE EAGLE.

"Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?" JOB XXXIX, 27.

MANY years had a noble eagle been confined in such a manner that no one had seen it even attempt to raise a wing. It had been cherished and fed that it might be exhibited for the gratification of visitors and friends. Perfectly subdued, unconscious now of its native power, it

remained inactive, and apparently contented, oblivious of the heights it once could soar.

But its owner was about to leave for a far country, never to return. He could not take the eagle with him, and an emotion of pity crossed his mind when he thought how long the bird had remained his prisoner. "I will do," said he, "one act of kindness before I go, which shall be remembered long after me." He unloosed the chain from the captive. His neighbors and children looked on with regret that they should see the eagle no more. A moment, and it would be gone forever! But no. The bird walked the usual round, which had been the length of his chain, looked tamely about, unconscious that he was free, and at length perched himself at his usual height.

The gazers looked on in wonder and in pity. Brief, however, was their pity. The slow rustling of a wing was heard. It was projected from the body, then folded. Anon it moved again. At last stretched to its full expansion, it quivered a moment in the air, then folded softly against its resting-place. Now slowly and cautiously the eagle expanded the other, and stood at last upon his perch with both wings spread, looking earnestly in the blue sky above. One effort to mount, then another. The wings have found their lost skill and strength. Upward, slowly, still upward—higher and speedier he mounts his way. The eye follows him in vain. Lost to sight, far above the mountain-top he is bathing his cramped wings in misty clouds, and revels in liberty forever.

Hast thou, O child of God, been pinioned long to the cares and toils of earth so that thy wings of faith and love have lost all power to rise? Long bound to earth, its hopes and visions, thou canst not shake thy wings at once. The heart tries to mount in prayer, but it tries in vain. Scenes of earth are floating still before the vision, and sounds of earth ring in the ears. But cease not thy efforts. Expand thy soul once more if only for a little. Raise the wing of thought first—still more, raise it higher yet. There,

it is spread now, trembling though it be. Thought has looked on death, and earth's scenes are dwindling in the distance; thought has listened to the voice on Calvary, and to the "new song" in heaven, and the calls and the idle tones and clamors of earth are becoming fainter and fainter still. Now it is time to try the other wing. O, child of God, pray now. If thou canst only say, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner," it will give thee strength. But a little higher yet. Once thou couldst soar, and thou mayst soar again. "His grace is sufficient for thee." Pray, now, "Lord, teach me how to pray." Thy head is low in the dust. Thy wings are quivering and spreading, and gaining strength in thy petition—"Restore unto me the joys of Thy salvation." Raise thine eyes, O child of mortality, and gaze on the Sun of Righteousness. Do his beams dazzle thee? Earth has no glory compared with his. Plume thyself now, and soar away, and the clouds of earth will soon be below thee, and that heaven which is purchased for thee full in view. O, child of God, let earth bind thee no more forever; alight upon its thorny soil daily and do thy duty; mingle in its scenes only as thou must, but remain not one day or night, unless thou plume thy flight to breathe invigorating, purifying influences of contemplation and prayer, that thou mayst be ready to rise to heaven when earth claims thee no more.



THE REFUGE IN THE DESERT.

"O Lord, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction." JEREMIAH XVI, 19.

WHATEVER may betide, God's people and his cause are safe. He that sends the storm provides the refuge.

A party of travelers in the desert were overtaken by the fierce simoom. At midday the sun was turned into darkness; the air was filled with flying particles of the finest sand, that choked the nostrils and blinded the eyes. The

foot-track was effaced. The form of a camel ten paces ahead could not be distinguished. Like blinding snow, driven and drifted by the winds of March, came the hot sands of the desert, stinging, whirling, drifting, commingling the earth and the sky. The patient camel groped his way with averted head; the dogged Arab buried himself in his mantle with his back to the storm; the travelers longed for deliverance. Before the simoom had reached its height, they came suddenly upon a rude building of stone, well protected with roof and doors, which the hand of charity had erected there in the desert for a shelter. With joy they rushed into it, and with closed doors, safe from sand, and heat, and wind, and happy in each other and in God their deliverer, they listened to the raging storm till its voice was hushed in the darkness of the night. So when the storm of indignation sweeps the earth; when the blast of the Almighty hides the sun, and rocks the solid globe; when, at midday, there is darkness that may be felt; when man and beast groan with terror, and the pilots of the desert lose their reckoning and resign themselves to fate, then is heard a voice above the tempest, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself for a little moment, till the indignation be overpast; for behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity."

He who creates the storm rides upon it; he will give us shelter; he will bring us peace. Let us have confidence in God. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes."

THE CAPITOL AND THE CROSS.

"He giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 CORINTHIANS XV, 57.

THERE is an affecting passage in Roman history, which records the death of Manlius. At night, and on the Cap-

itol, fighting hand to hand, had he repelled the Gauls and saved the city when all seemed lost. Afterward he was accused, but the Capitol towered in sight of the Forum where he was tried, and, as he was about to be condemned, he stretched out his hands and pointed, weeping, to that arena of his triumph. At this the people burst into tears, and the judges could not pronounce sentence. Again the trial proceeded, but was again defeated; nor could he be convicted till they had removed him to a low spot, from which the Capitol was invisible.

What the Capitol was to Manlius the Cross of Christ is to the Christian. While that is in view, while the sacred face of the Redeemer, swollen with tears and stripes, is in view, in vain will earth and sin seek to shake the Christian's loyalty and devotion—one look at that purple monument of a love which alone, and when all was dark and lost, interposed for our rescue—and their efforts will be baffled. Low must we sink, and blotted from our hearts must be the memory of that deed, before we can become faithless to the Savior's cause, and perfidious to his glory.

“When I survey the wondrous Cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.”



DISCOURAGING CHILDREN.

“Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”
COLOSSIANS III, 21.

THE father will discourage good in his son, when he stings him with a sense of injustice, and keeps him in a wounded feeling, by his own ungoverned, groundless passion. But in the case of the mother, dealing with her very young child, there is no place for even so much as a feeling of impatience. No crisis occurs that she has any right to carry by a storm. And yet there are many mothers who breed a climate of storms for their children

to grow up in, even from the first. They make an element of pettishness and passion, and call it Christian nature to maintain a kind of quarrel with their children, from infancy upward. We do not commonly conceive that the children are discouraged, thus, in the matter of piety; but the real fact is, that their better, higher nature, quite worn down by such treatment, sinks at last into a kind of atrophy, which is the essence of all discouragement. By the time they are passed through this first chapter of torment, their faces even have begun to take on a forlorn expression, as if their well-abused feeling had been quite choked off from every thing hopeful or good. Nothing is more beautiful than the God-ward affinities, and glad impulses to good, in a childish soul; but when it has once been kiln-dried in this hot furnace of motherly or fatherly passion, there is no more any putting forth after the divine. A kind of indifference, or sullen prejudice, sets off the heart from God, and the gentle affinities close up under the stupor of so great early abuse and discouragement.

Children are also discouraged and hardened to good by too much of prohibition. There is a monotony of continuous, ever-sounding, prohibition, which is really awful. It does not stop with ten commandments, like the word of Sinai, but it keeps the thunder up, from day to day, saying always, thou shalt not do this, nor this, nor this, till, in fact, there is really nothing left to be done. The whole enjoyment, use, benefit, of life is quite used up by the prohibitions. The child lives under a tilt-hammer of commandment, beaten to the ground as fast as he attempts to rise. All commandments, of course, in such a strain of injunction, come to sound very much alike, and one appears to be about as important as another. And the result is that, as they are all in the same emphasis, and are all equally annoying, the child learns to hate them all alike, and puts them all away. He could not think of heartily accepting them *all*, and it would even

be a kind of irreverence to make a selection. Nothing so fatally worries a child as this fault of over-commandment. The study should be rather to forbid as few things as possible, and then to soundly enforce what is forbidden. Such kind of prohibitions the child will even like, and will be all the happier, that he has something good to observe. But nothing can be more impotent, in the way of authority, than the din of a continual prohibition. Even the commandments of God will, in such a case, be robbed of all just authority, by the custom of a general weariness and distaste; in which all highest mandates are leveled to equality with the pettiest and most useless restraints.

Again, it is a great discouragement to piety in children, when they are governed in a hard, unfeeling way, or in a manner of force and overbearing absolutism. Any thing which puts the child aloof from the parent, or takes away the confidence of love and sympathy, will as certainly be a wall to shut him away from God. If his Christian father is felt only as a tyrant, he will seem to have a tyrant in God's name to bear; and that will be enough to create a sullen prejudice against all sacred things. Nor is the case at all better when the child is cowed under fear of such a parent, and reduced to a feeling of dread or abject submission. There is a beautiful courage in children as respects approach to God, when God is not presented as a bugbear; and this natural state of courage, is just that which makes the time of childhood so ingenuously open to religion. But if their courage, even toward their father, is already broken down into fear and servile submission, they will only think of God with as much greater fear, and shrink from all the claims of piety with a kind of abject recoil, as from a thing forbidden. No gentleness even of Christ will suffice, in such a case, to win, or reassure the broken courage of the soul. I recall a family in which the father, known as a man of condition and of no little repute for his Christian good

works, brought up a large family of boys to be ruled at a distance. He addressed them in a kind of imperious, unfeeling way; not with any violence of manner, but with a stern-faced grin that seemed to say, "It is well that you fear me." And fear him they most certainly did—fear was the element in which they grew. And the result was that having no self-respect, and living under a law of mere suppression, they fell into base immoralities from their childhood, and were never afterward known, even one of them, to have so much as a thought of piety.

THE TWO YOUNG MEN OF GLASGOW.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." ECCLESIASTES XI, 1.

I WAS standing by the side of my mother under the spacious porch of Dr. Beattie's church, Glasgow, awaiting the hour for afternoon service when I observed two young men turn a corner and walk toward the church. They were dressed in their working-clothes, unshaven and dirty, and slightly intoxicated. As they passed the church door they assumed a swaggering, irreverent gait, laughed, and finally commenced singing a profane song. My mother turned to me and said, "Follow these two men, and invite them to a seat in our pew."

I soon overtook them, and delivered my mother's message. One laughed scornfully, and began to swear; the other paused and pondered; he was evidently struck with the nature of the invitation. His companion again swore, and was about to drag him away. But he still paused. I repeated the invitation, and in a few seconds he looked in my face and said, "When I was a boy like you I went to church every Sunday. I have not been inside of a church for three years. *I do n't feel right.* I believe I will go with you." I seized his hand, and led him back to the house of God in spite of the remonstrances and oaths of

his companion. A most excellent sermon was preached from Ecclesiastes xi, 1. The young man was attentive, but seemed abashed and downcast.

At the conclusion of the service my mother kindly said to him, "Have you a Bible, young man?" "No, ma'am; but I can get one," was his reply. "You can read, of course?" said she. "Yes, ma'am." "Well, take my son's Bible till you procure one of your own, and come to meeting again next Lord's day. I will always be happy to accommodate you with a seat."

He put the Bible in his pocket and hurried away. At family worship that evening my mother prayed fervently for the conversion of that young man.

Next Sunday came, and the next, but the stranger did not appear. My mother frequently spoke of him, and appeared grieved at his absence. He had doubtless been the subject of her closet devotions. On the third Sabbath morning, while the congregation were singing the first Psalm, the young man again entered our pew. He was now dressed genteelly, and appeared thin and pale, as if from recent sickness. Immediately after the benediction the stranger laid my Bible on the desk and left the house without giving my mother an opportunity she much desired of conversing with him. On one of the blank leaves of the Bible we found some writing in pencil, signed "W. C." He asked to be remembered in my mother's prayers.

Years rolled on; my mother passed to her heavenly rest; I grew up to manhood, and the stranger was forgotten.

In the Autumn of 18—, the ship *St. George*, of which I was the medical officer, anchored in Table Bay.

Next day being Sabbath I attended morning service at the Wesleyan Chapel. At the conclusion of worship, a gentleman seated behind me asked to look at my Bible. In a few minutes he returned it, and I walked into the street. I had arranged to dine at the "*George*," and was mounting the steps in front of that hotel, when the gentleman who had examined my Bible laid his hand on my

shoulder and begged to have a few minutes' conversation. We were shown into a private apartment. As soon as we were seated, he examined my countenance with great attention, and then began to sob; tears rolled down his cheeks; he was evidently laboring under some intense emotion. He asked me several questions—my name, age, occupation, birthplace, etc. He then inquired if I had not, when a boy, many years ago, invited a drunken Sabbath-breaker to a seat in Dr. Beattie's church. I was astonished—the subject of my mother's anxiety and prayers was before me. Mutual explanations and congratulations followed, after which Mr. C. gave me a short history of his life.

He was born in the town of Leeds, of highly-respectable and religious parents, who gave him a good education, and trained him up in the way of righteousness. When about fifteen years of age his father died, and his mother's straitened circumstances obliged her to take him from school and put him to learn a trade. In his new situation he imbibed all manner of evil, became incorrigibly vicious, and broke his mother's heart. Freed now from all parental restraint, he left his employers and traveled to Scotland. In the city of Glasgow he had lived and sinned for two years, when he was arrested in his career through my mother's instrumentality. On the first Sabbath of our strange interview, he confessed that after he left church he was seized with pangs of unutterable remorse. The sight of a mother and a son worshipping God together recalled the happy days of his own boyhood, when he went to church and Sunday school, and when he also had a mother—a mother whose latter days he had embittered, and whose gray hairs he had brought with sorrow to the grave. His mental suffering threw him on a bed of sickness, from which he arose a changed man. He returned to England, cast himself at the feet of his maternal uncle, and asked and obtained forgiveness. With his uncle's consent he studied for the ministry, and on being ordained he entered the missionary field, and had been laboring for several years in Southern Africa.

"The moment I saw your Bible this morning," he said, "I recognized it. And now do you know who was my companion on the memorable Sabbath you invited me to church? He was the notorious Jack Hill, who was hanged about a year afterward for highway robbery. I was dragged from the very brink of infamy and destruction, and saved as a brand from the burning. You remember Dr. Beattie's text on the day of my salvation—'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.'"

IMMORTALITY—AN ARGUMENT.

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." ISAIAH XXVI, 19.

It is, we conceive, in strict conformity with the rules of philosophizing to conclude that there is a supreme court in which the countless unlitigated causes of time are docketed, and the innumerable claims of justice, that can never be asserted here, shall be finally heard.

In 1839 Mr. Airy found that the distance of Herschel from the sun was continually varying. La Verrier compared all the variations, and concluded that they could only be accounted for by the existence of a world beyond, and that the greatest of Herschel's variations marked the period of its conjunction with that unknown world. Taking for granted that its distance from the sun corresponds with that of the next interior planet, he estimated its distance at twice that of Herschel; then by the law that the squares of the distances are as the cubes of the times, he computed its annual revolution at two hundred and twenty years. Supposing the plane of its orbit to correspond with that of Herschel, he determined the point of space in which it was at that moment to be found. He wrote to a friend who commanded a powerful telescope, telling him where to point in order to see a new world. The result verified his

calculations. Thus a philosopher in his study, with the deviations of a world from its proper path, and the laws of the universe for the elements of his calculations, pierces thousands of millions of miles into space, and sees with his eye of science an unknown world. Thus, with the moral deviations of this world and the eternal laws of justice for the elements of our calculation, can we not pierce eternity and behold a world of righteous retribution?

I write under circumstances that impress this argument upon my mind—in the village where in childhood I hailed the rising sun, and looked up through the green branches to the bright stars, and first thought of Him who leadeth them forth as a shepherd doth his flocks, yet numbers the hairs on the head of his humblest child, and wept as I whispered “Our Father.” Near by is the old graveyard; it was inclosed with a board fence, encompassed with hazel bushes, fringed with elder blossoms, and entered by a narrow gate, through which the pall-bearers bore the coffin before the hearse was known, and beside which was a stile, where the little ones and their mothers were wont to cross on summer evenings, to step softly between the graves, and silently read the inscriptions on the simple headstones; there I first learned how dreadful death is, and my eyes were taught to send forth tears at the mention of the Psalmist’s words: “Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.” Lo! streets now run through this sacred spot, and the busy wheels rattle over the broken gravestones. And is this the end of those sweet ones whose heads fond parents laid upon down and curtained with damask, whose eyes sparkled with genius, and whose lips were full of truth; whose feet were swift on errands of mercy, and whose hands were outstretched to the poor?

Behind the walls of a dilapidated church is another graveyard, many of whose graves are thrown open. In one yet green and undisturbed rests a man who, after a peaceful and prayerful life, went through the valley of death

fearing no evil. As my heart cried out, "My father!" I *felt* that the words described more than a phantom.

Passing through the streets, now streets of strangers, and over roads much changed to a magnificent native grove on a sunny hill-side, I came to the streets of the new city of the dead. Here I was at home. Wandering through carriage-ways, and marking the names on the monuments, I lived my early days over again. The dead are around me, not in their winding-sheets, but in their loveliest living forms. The aged pastor spoke once more his words of wisdom, the sufferer uttered anew his tale of sorrow, "loving eyes glanced love to love again." "Now there is a sound of revelry by night," and anon the sweet flute pours forth its plaintive notes beneath the harvest moon. But the illusion vanishes; I am again among the dead. O, with what heroic struggles, with what patient endurance, with what repentant sighs, with what cries of agony, with what hidden griefs, what desolated hearth-stones are these green graves associated! Well do I recollect when my mother, returning from the death-chamber of a child of sorrow, drew me close to her breast, and told me, with subdued tones, how the broken heart of the sufferer was healed, and how her parting blessing fell softly on the heads of her little ones, and how unearthly whispers passed her cold lips, and how, when she ceased to whisper, she gave the promised signal that her departing spirit greeted the coming angels. There are other scenes that I may not paint. Passing to the western limit of the grounds, I sat down on the grassy slope to enjoy the surrounding prospect. There, amid a merry group, I had gathered wild plums and walnuts; there I had seen the deer start from the bushes, and the Indian rush forth in his gigantic pastimes. How changed! On the right is the thrifty village with its spires; on the left is the long-drawn valley, with its variety of pleasing landscapes, and down it rushes the fire-breathing iron horse, with his cargo of merry travelers, while beside it stretches the telegraph wire, thrilling like a nerve with the news

of the metropolis. Westward rise hills on hills in graceful slopes, till the last green summit melts into the setting sun.

The pastures are clothed with flocks, the fields are covered with corn, the houses encompassed with flowers, while here and there stand the grand remains of the ancient forest like organ-lofts, with their thousand feathered pipes ready to pour forth notes of praise at the morning hour.

O God! thou moldest the earth into forms of enrapturing beauty; "thou visitest it and greatly enrichest it with the river of God; thou preparest them corn when thou hast so provided for it; thou waterest the ridges thereof; thou settlest the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof; thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness." Thou who dost beautify and renovate the natural world, hast thou prepared no spring for the moral? Is life a mystery? or a probation and preparation for a better state? Almighty Father! where are thy children who made this wilderness to blossom as the rose? our fathers who trusted in thee? our mothers who breathed thy name with their dying lips? Hast thou not folded them to thy loving bosom?

I would not depreciate the light of Revelation. Pleasant above all things it is to stand in the temple of Christ, and amid sweet song and solemn feast to hear of Him who is "the resurrection and the life." Pleasant also to stand in the temple of nature, with its floor carpeted with green and its roof fretted with stars, and its gallery of mountains charged with heavenly music, and while the time-piece of the skies measures off our days, to listen to the voices of the reason and the heart speaking of a better land. To me the two revelations are in harmony, the one confirms what the other suggests, the one completes what the other begins. Nature puts angels at the sepulcher to roll away the stone; revelation brings from the grave-clothes the warm and living man, calling forth the exclamation, "My Lord and my God!"—*E. Thomson, D. D.*

THE DESERTED FORT.

"There were they in great fear, where no fear was." PSALM LIII, 5.

As I was gliding along, some time since, upon the placid waters of a large river, there loomed up in the distance a certain well-known fort. It bore a great name—was said to have been once formidable, and certainly had still a formidable appearance. For one as ignorant of its condition as myself, it was easy to imagine how panic-struck some men might be to find themselves within reach of its terrible guns. I had sailed under the far-famed frowning rock of Gibraltar, and past the strong fortresses of Malta and Acre, but it suddenly occurred to me that I had never been *within* a fort. I gladly therefore availed myself, with others, of an opportunity, kindly given by our captain, to stop and visit one. I thought it would at least gratify my curiosity to see for myself the terrible enginery that, from behind the massive wall, was ready to hurl thunderbolts of destruction upon an invading foe. Accordingly, full in the face of the imaginary implements of warfare and death, we strode up to the open gates and entered. But lo! the fort, so dismal in outward appearance, was deserted. Neither soldier nor sentinel was there. Not a gun remained to speak even of the past. And on all sides were visible the most decisive evidences of dilapidation and decay.

As I went on my way, I was disposed to ask if it were not often thus in our particular experience. Is there not along the way many an enemy's fort, imposing and dreadful in appearance, which, after all, proves to be, when examined, an empty show? So the disciples found it, when, on coming up to the sepulcher of their Master, they found the dreaded "stone" rolled away.

So with duty. In the distance it sometimes looks like an impregnable fortress. In our weakness and timidity, we doubt if we can meet it. The cross seems too heavy

for us. The "Hill Difficulty" never can be surmounted. But we have only to go forward in God's strength, and meet the responsibility laid upon us, to find all difficulty strangely vanish. The "lion in the way" is seen to be chained. The Cross is discovered to be a blessing. The "yoke is easy," the "burden is light." The dreaded stronghold of difficulty is empty.

So with trials. In the anticipation of them we are too easily betrayed into alarm. We magnify the danger, and cry out, "All these things are against me," "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." The dark outlines of the fortress seem, in our excited imagination, to stretch away and tower aloft far, far beyond the reality. The monster "Apollyon," the "lions in the way," the giants "Pope," "Pagan," and "Despair," being seen from a distance, and through the mists of earthly vision, are all supposed to be more terrible than we actually find them to be, when, clad in the armor, and sustained by the strength of God, we meet and encounter the enemy. If not an empty fortress, it is always found, by a lively Christian faith, to be one whose *destiny* is desertion, and whose history must sooner or later tell of defeat.

Let us learn not to judge of the strength of any hostile array against truth, justice, and piety, by external appearances of strength; but calmly consider what evidences of weakness there may be *within the threatening walls*.



PULASKI'S WAR-CRY.

"I press to the mark." PHILIPPIANS III, 14.

BLUCHER, the greatest general that Prussia ever claimed, won most of his battles by the motto, *Forward*. "Forward," in his councils of war; and "forward," on the field of battle, was his constant watchword, and he suited the action to the word. The promptness and energy with which he planned and executed, gave him the nickname

of "Marshal Forward." Pulaski, one of the brave Poles who espoused the American cause—and to whom, as well as Kosciusko, our country owed an almost incalculable debt—in one or two instances turned the fortunes of war against our enemies by uttering his habitual cry of "Forwards, brudern! forwards!" Here and there and everywhere, in the thickest of the fight, the failing strength of the American soldier was often revived, and his arm nerved with new vigor, as he heard the inspiring voice of this undaunted general, above the din of battle, shouting, in broken English, "Forwards, brudern! forwards!"

Discretion, in war, is said to be the better part of valor. But discretion in the Christian cause is expressed in the war-cry of Pulaski. "Reaching forward toward those things that are before, I press toward the mark." "If any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him." No matter what foes oppose our progress, in the strength of God they can be conquered.



THE FALLING BOY.

"Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses." PSALM CVII, 19.

I ONCE saw a lad on the roof of a very high building, where several men were at work. He was gazing about with apparent unconcern, when his foot slipped, and he fell. In falling he caught by a rope, and hung suspended in mid air, where he could sustain himself but a short time. He perfectly knew his situation, and expected in a few minutes to be dashed on the rocks below. At this moment a kind and powerful man rushed out of the house, and standing beneath him with extended arms, called out, "Let go of the rope; I will receive you." "I can't do it." "Let go of the rope, and I promise you shall escape unharmed." The boy hesitated for a moment and then quitting his hold, dropped easily and safely

into the arms of his deliverer. Here is a simple *act of faith*. The poor boy knew his danger; he saw his deliverer, and heard his voice. He *believed* in him—*trusted* him—and, letting go every other dependence and hope, he dropped into his arms.

Do you feel that you have done all you can? *Just stop doing*, and begin to *trust Christ to do it all for you*, and you are safe. A man is rowing a boat on a river, just above a dreadful cataract; the current begins to bear him downward; the spectators give him up for lost. "He is gone," they exclaim; but in another moment a rope is thrown toward the wretched man—it strikes the water near the boat: *now* how does the case stand? Do all the spectators call upon him to *row?* to *try harder* to reach the shore? when with every stroke of his arm the boat is evidently nearing to the falls? O no! give up your desperate attempt! *take hold of the rope!* But he chooses to row, and in a few moments he disappears, and perishes. All his hope lay, not in rowing, but in laying hold of the rope; for while he was rowing he could not grasp the rope. So the sinner's hope lies not in struggling to save himself, but in *ceasing* to struggle; for while he expects to accomplish the work of salvation himself, he will not look to Christ to do it for him.

But some abuse the doctrine of unmerited grace, and say, "If all I have to do is to cease from attempting to save myself, and to be willing that Christ should do the work of my salvation, why urge me to become a Christian, or to do *any thing!* why not let me sit still, and wait till Christ shall come and pardon me?"

And what if the man in the boat had dropped his oars, and then folded his hands; and waited for the rope to save him? He might as well have died rowing as sitting still; and would *certainly* have died in the former case. But he must *grasp the rope*. So the sinner must lay hold on the *hope set before him*; not by waiting till he is better, but by first concluding that he never shall be

any better in the way he is going on, and then *looking to Christ*.

“Venture on him, venture freely,
Let no other trust intrude;
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.”

PREACHING CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

“The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” 1 CORINTHIANS I, 22-24.

WHEN the Moravian missionaries went to Greenland, in 1733, they thought that the most rational way of instructing the heathen was to speak first of the existence and perfections of God, and to enforce obedience to the Divine law; and they hoped by these means gradually to prepare their minds for the reception of the sublimer and more mysterious truths of the Gospel. But this plan proved wholly ineffectual. For five years they labored in this style, and could scarcely obtain a patient hearer from the savages. But circumstances, unexpected and uncontrived by themselves, led to an entire change of procedure.

In the beginning of June, 1738, brother Beck, one of the missionaries, was copying a translation of a portion of the Gospels. He read a few sentences to the heathen, and, after some conversation with them, he gave them an account of the creation of the world, the fall of man, and his recovery by Christ. In speaking of the redemption of man, he enlarged with more than usual energy on the sufferings and death of our Savior, and exhorted his hearers seriously to consider the vast expense at which Jesus had ransomed the souls of his people. He then read to them out of the New Testament the history of our Savior's agony in the garden. Upon this the Lord opened the heart of one of the company, whose name was Kayarnak, who,

stepping to the table in an earnest manner, exclaimed, "How was that? tell me that once more, for I, too, desire to be saved." These words, which were such as had never before been uttered by a Greenlander, penetrated the soul of brother Beck, who, with great emotion, gave them a fuller account of the life and death of our Savior, and the scheme of salvation through him. Some of the pagans laid their hands on their mouth—which is their usual custom when struck with amazement. On Kayarnak an impression was made that was not transient, but had taken deep root in his heart. By means of his conversation, his family, or those who lived in the same tent with him, were brought under conviction; and before the end of the month three large families came with all their property and pitched their tents near the dwelling of the missionaries, in order, as they said, to hear the joyful news of man's redemption. Kayarnak became eminently serviceable to the mission as a teacher of his countrymen, and adorned his Christian profession by a godly walk and upright behavior till his death.

The missionaries now understood the Divine mode of reaching and changing the heart of savage or of civilized. They determined, in the literal sense of the words, to preach at once Christ and him crucified. And "no sooner," says Mr. James Montgomery, "did they declare unto the Greenlanders 'the word of reconciliation' in its native simplicity, than they beheld its converting and saving power. This reached the hearts of their audience, and produced the most astonishing effects. An impression was made which opened a way to their consciences and illuminated their understandings. They remained no longer the stupid and brutish creatures they had once been; they felt they were sinners, and trembled at their danger; they rejoiced in the Savior, and were rendered capable of sublimer pleasures than those arising from plenty of seals and the low gratification of sensual appetites. A sure foundation being thus laid in the knowledge of a cruci-

fied Redeemer, the missionaries soon found that this supplied their young converts with a powerful motive to the abhorrence of sin, and the performance of every moral duty toward God and their neighbor; taught them to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; animated them with the glorious hope of life and immortality; and gave them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as the Creator, Preserver, and Moral Governor of the world, in a manner far more correct and influential than they could have hoped to attain had they persevered in their first mode of instruction. The missionaries themselves derived benefit from this new method of preaching. The doctrines of the Cross of Christ warmed and enlivened their own souls in so powerful a manner, that they could address the heathen with uncommon liberty and fervor, and were often astonished at each other's power of utterance. In short, the happiest results have attended this practice, not only at first, and in Greenland, but in every other country where the Moravian brethren have labored for the conversion of the heathen."

"I believe," says the Rev. Benjamin Rice, "that the universal experience of missionaries in India is, that when the doctrine of the Cross is first propounded to any Hindoo, and especially to a Brahmin, it is regarded by him, as it was by the ancient Greeks, as utter 'foolishness.' But when an educated Hindoo, whether Brahmin or otherwise, can be brought to give sufficient attention to the subject to understand the Gospel system, the evidence on which it is based, and the complete and satisfactory provision which it makes for those spiritual wants of humanity which Hindooism itself professes to meet but does not, I have almost uniformly found that *then* the doctrine of the Cross commands the respect of such a man. The numerous conversions that have actually taken place among the Brahmins—conversions which have led to the renunciation of home, kindred, and property, and submitting to a life of contempt among their own people

for the sake of Christ—sufficiently disprove the truth of Rammohun Roy's assertion."

A converted Hindoo, an educated man, informed a missionary, some years ago, that in reading the Bible he had been very much struck with the fact, that, while all the Hindoo incarnations had been assumed for the most trivial objects, and the incarnate deities had led lives of the most degrading character, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, from pure love to a sinful world, became incarnate that he might save them from ruin.

The Rev. KRISHNA MOHAN BANERJI, formerly a Brahmin, and now an ordained minister at Calcutta, in connection with the Church of England, states that, while the doctrines of Christianity were under discussion by Dr. Duff and the young infidel Hindoos of Calcutta, his mind particularly revolted against the doctrine of the atonement, "till God," he says, "by the influence of his Holy Spirit, was graciously pleased to open my soul to discern its sinfulness and guilt, and the suitableness of the great salvation which centered in the atoning death of a Divine Redeemer. And the same doctrine of the atonement which, when not properly understood, was my last great argument against the Divine origin of the Bible, is now, when rightly apprehended, a principal reason for my belief and vindication of the Bible as the production of infinite wisdom and love."

The experience of Dr. Duff, in his discussion with the class to which this young man belonged, is deeply interesting and instructive. They were youths who had been educated in the Government College at Calcutta, an institution from which all reference to religion was, on system, excluded. The result of such training was what might have been anticipated. Class after class issued forth from this College, who, by the course of enlightened study pursued, were made alive to the gross absurdities of their own systems. These, therefore, says Dr. Duff, they boldly denounced as masses of imposture and debas-

ing error, and the Brahmins as deceivers of the people, though many of themselves belonged to that exalted and sacred class. But they were in a state of mind utterly blank as regards moral and religious truth—moral and religious obligation. They were infidels or skeptics of the most perfect kind, believing in nothing, believing not even in the existence of a Deity, and glorying in their unbelief. All subjects seemed to be more or less tolerated but religion. Against religion in every form they raged and raved. They scrupled not to scoff at Christianity; they scrupled not to avow their disbelief in the very being of a God; thus realizing the condition of the men described by an ancient author, who “fled from superstition, leaped over religion, and sunk into atheism.” They despised the character of a missionary, whom they thought fit for nothing but to stand in lanes and corners of the streets, and there address the Pariahs and lowest castes of the people. Dr. Duff succeeded at last in bringing them to a public disputation, met them on their own ground, and argued with them the question of the being of God, “with a determinate view,” he says, “to this noblest end—the getting a hearing on the higher and more glorious subject of Christ crucified.” At the end of the disputation the young men for the most part declared, “We now believe there is a Great First Cause, the intelligent Author of all things.”

Still, these young Hindoos were not prepared to listen to the Gospel message. Was it from God? they demanded. And the evidences of revealed religion must be discussed in detail. Night after night these young men brought forward the old and now exploded arguments of Hume on the subject of miracles; and night after night had the Christian missionary, on the banks of the Ganges, and for the satisfaction of Hindoos, to combat the plausible reasonings and deductions of that great but misguided man.

“The evidences in favor of Christianity as a revelation from God having been admitted by several as irresistible,

and by others no longer opposed, we last of all," says Dr. Duff, "came to the grand terminating object of all our labors; namely, the announcement of the message itself, the full and free declaration of the essential doctrines of the Gospel. It was then, and then only, as might have been expected, that vital impressions began to be made. Hitherto we were engaged in the removal of obstacles that opposed our entrance into the temple of truth. Having now reached the threshold, we crossed it in order to discover and admire the beauties of the inner workmanship. Hitherto the intellect chiefly was called into exercise. We had now something suited to the feelings and conscience. The Word of God is the alone direct and efficacious instrument in awakening and regenerating a guilty and polluted world, and the Holy Spirit of God the alone almighty Agent in crowning this instrumentality with triumphs that shall issue in the glories of eternity. Accordingly, it was when unfolding, in simple and absolute dependence on divine grace, the Scripture doctrine of the sinfulness, depravity, and helplessness of human nature, that the heart of the first convert became seriously affected under a sense of the guilt and vileness of sin, and when unfolding the inexpressible love of the Divine Redeemer to our apostate world, that another heart was touched, yea, melted, under the display of such infinite tenderness. Thus it was that the Gospel triumphed; and the doctrine of the Cross, brought home to the heart and conscience, and sealed by the Divine Spirit, maintained its high pre-eminence as the only antecedent to the conversion of a soul toward God."

The Brahmins thus won to God exhibited a power of faith worthy of the best age of the Church of Christ. One instance will be sufficient illustration. "It was about nine in the evening"—said Dr. Duff, addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland—"and if any one here has been in that far-distant land, he will know what the external scene was, when I say it was on the

banks of the Ganges, and under the full effulgence of an Indian moon, whose brightness almost rivals the noon-day glory of the sun in these Northern climes. Two or three had resolved, as friends, to go along with this individual, and witness a spectacle never before seen by us, and perhaps not soon again to be seen by Europeans. It was heart-rending throughout. Having reached the outer door of the house, the elder brother of this young man advanced toward him, and, looking at him wistfully in the face, began first to implore him, by the most endearing terms as a brother, that he would not bring this shame and disgrace upon himself and his family—which was a most respectable one. Again and again did he earnestly appeal to him by the sympathies and the tenderness and the affection of a brother. The young man listened, and, with intense emotion, simply in substance replied, ‘That he had now found out what error was; that he had now found out what truth was; and that he was resolved to cling to the truth.’ Finding that this argument had failed, he began to assert the authority of the elder brother; an authority sanctioned by the usages of the people. He endeavored to show what power he had over him, if he cruelly brought this disgrace upon his family. The young man still firmly replied, ‘I have found out what error is; I have found out what truth is; and I have resolved to cling to the truth.’ The brother next held out bribes and allurements. There was nothing which he was not prepared to grant. There was no indulgence whatever which he would not allow him in the very bosom of the family—indulgences absolutely prohibited and regarded as abhorrent in the Hindoo system—if he would only stop short of the last and awful step of baptism, the public sealing of his foul and fatal apostasy. The young man still resolutely adhered to his simple but emphatic declaration.

“It was now, when every argument had finally failed, that his aged mother, who had all the while been present

within hearing, though he knew it not, raised a howl of agony, a yell of horror, which it is impossible for the imagination to conceive. It pierced into the heart, and made the very flesh creep and shiver. The young man could hold out no longer. He was powerfully affected, and shed tears. With uplifted arms, and eyes raised to heaven, he forcibly exclaimed, '*No: I can not stay.*' And this was the last time he ever expected to hold converse with his brethren or his mother.

"I could not help feeling then," continued Dr. Duff, "and have often thought since, how wonderful is the power of truth—how sovereign the grace of God! If it be said that the Hindoo character is griping and avaricious, divine grace is stronger still, and is able to conquer. If it is yielding and fickle—ay, fickle as the shifting quicksands—divine grace can give it consistency and strength. If it is feeble and cowardly, divine grace can make the feeble powerful, and convert the coward into a moral hero. What signal, nay, let me add, invincible testimony do such triumphs bear to the power of the everlasting Gospel!"

THE MISSIONARY BOX.

"Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." LUKE XII, 32.

I WAS once traveling in Staffordshire with a beloved friend, and he was accustomed to tell a very interesting story about a little girl in his Sunday school.

"I am a great advocate," he was accustomed to say, "for missionary boxes. We are not at all a rich congregation, but by means of these boxes we contrive to send up a considerable sum to the Missionary Society. I never refuse a missionary box to the poorest child, provided that he or she will promise to make a good use of it. I am accustomed to give out the boxes after the mis-

sionary meeting, either to the original proprietors, or to those who will take them for the first time.

"I have a lady who is *my right hand* in the missionary cause, and she is generally on the platform on such occasions. After one of our meetings, I was thus distributing the boxes, when there came up a little girl of the name of Sarah Clarke, and put in her claim for a missionary box. My good friend, the lady to whom I have referred, protested against the request being granted.

"'No,' said she; 'I do not think, sir, it would be right to give a box to Sarah Clarke. I know her, and I know her mother very well. They are the poorest people in the town. She will never be able to get any thing in her box, and it will only be a waste of the Society's property to give her one.'

"'Well!' I replied, 'I have more confidence in Sarah than you, and I will give her a box;' and Sarah put it under her arm, and carried it to her home in comparative triumph.

"Two or three months had passed away, when Sarah came one morning to my residence, and I thought she looked very sad and melancholy, and it immediately struck me that something was wrong about the box. I went out, and said to her—

"'Well, Sarah! has somebody stolen the box?'

"'No, sir,' replied the child.

"'Then, not got any thing in it?'

"'O yes,' said Sarah; 'got too much in it, sir!'

"'O, that's right, Sarah! That's just the thing for me.'

"'Yes, sir,' continued the child, 'yesterday I had a penny to put in it, and I was obliged to take the hammer, and *hammer it in*. I could not get it in otherwise. To-day I have another penny: I can not get that in at all, and don't know what to do with it.'

"'Well done, Sarah!' I replied; 'I shall manage that for you. You bring the box to me, and I shall empty it,

and take an account of what is in it; or I'll give you another missionary box, that you may go on with your undertaking.'

"That was done, and Sarah went on with her collecting. The missionary meeting came round, and my friend the secretary read a catalogue of missionary boxes as long as my arm; and when he came to Sarah Clarke's, how much do you think was found in it? Just six dollars and forty-eight cents. As the announcement was made, I looked to my friend on the platform who had not quite approved of my confidence in Sarah, and said, 'What do you think of that?' 'Ah,' said she, 'give missionary boxes to whom you please, I shall not refuse again.'

"But that," said the eloquent speaker, "was only half the story. After Sarah obtained her missionary box, and began her labors for the heathen, her exertions had a reactionary influence upon herself. She became more serious; she was more diligent at her lessons, and more attentive to the Sunday school. Her pious and devoted teacher could not but observe the great change that had come over the child, and took great pains in giving her instruction in the knowledge of salvation. About two years after Sarah began her missionary labors, she was stretched upon the bed of languishing. It soon appeared evident to all that death was in the cup. Her sympathizing teacher was often at her bedside to tell her of Jesus, and to comfort her mind in this hour of trial. Her school-fellows were permitted to go and hear the testimony of this dear child to the value of the Gospel. I was often in attendance to pray with her and to sustain her mind, and on the last day of her existence upon earth I stood by her bedside to cheer her in the dark valley. I saw her features were sunk and her limbs wasted away, and her spirit just prepared to take its flight to the heavenly world, and, looking at her, I said, 'Sarah! do you think that you love the Lord Jesus Christ?' 'O yes, sir,' said the child, faintly and feebly, yet with such a look

as went irresistibly to my heart; 'O yes, sir, I know that I love Jesus, and I am going to be with Jesus forever.' Sarah died that day in the faith and in the hope of the Gospel, and was gathered as a lamb into the heavenly fold."

Parents! encourage your children to become collectors for the missionary cause; you don't know but that, when their thoughts are turned upon the heathen, they may begin themselves to feel the vast importance of their own salvation.

Teachers! lead your classes to think of the heathen, and encourage within them the missionary spirit; you don't know but you may be preparing some Sarah Clarke for an early grave, and an early exit to glory.

Friends! remember your obligations to Jesus, and when these little ones bring their boxes to you, entreating your sympathy and liberality, instead of frowning upon them, drop the cent, or the three-cent piece, or the dime into the box, to encourage them in their early appeal and in their youthful labors.

Dear children! begin now, like Sarah Clarke, your missionary career; love her Savior and her God, and serve him with all your heart, and all your activity, as you know not how soon you may be called to follow her to an early tomb.



THE CAPACITY OF RELIGION EXTIRPATED BY DISUSE.

"Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath." MATTHEW xxv, 28, 29.

ALL living members, whether of body or mind, require use, or exercise. It is necessary to their development, and without it they even die. Thus, if one of the arms be kept in free use, from childhood onward, while the

other is drawn up over the head and made rigid there, by long and violent detention, a feat of religious austerity which the idolaters of the East often practice, the free arm and shoulder will grow to full size, and the other will gradually shrink and perish. So if one of the eyes were permanently covered, so as never to see the light, the other would be likely to grow more sharp and precise in its power, while this is losing its capacity and becoming a discontinued organ, or inlet of perception. It is on the same principle that the fishes which inhabit the underground river of a great western cave, while, in form and species, they appear to correspond with others that swim in the surface waters of the region adjacent, have yet the remarkable distinction of possessing no eyes. Since there is no light in the underground element, the physical organism instinctively changes type. It will not even go on to make eyes, when they can not be used. It therefore drops them out, presenting us the strange, exceptional product of an eyeless race.

So it is with all mental and spiritual organs. Not used, they gradually wither and die. The child, for example, that grows up in utter neglect and without education, or any thing to develop its powers, grows dull, at last, and brutish; and, by the time it is twenty or thirty years old, the powers it had appear to be very much taken away. The man, thus abridged in faculty, can not learn to read without the greatest difficulty. The hand can not be trained to grace, or the eye to exactness. The very conscience, disused, as having any relation to God, is blunted and stupefied. But, while we note this visible decay of the functions specified, let it be observed that, here, in the case of the child, there is no such thing as a complete disuse. The most uneducated man has a certain necessary use of his common faculties of intelligence, and, in some low sense, keeps them in exercise. He can not take care of his body, can not provide for life, can not act his part among men, without contrivance,

thought, plan, memory, reason, all the powers that distinguish him as an intelligent being. Hence these faculties never can be wholly exterminated by disuse, however much reduced in scope and quality they may be. But it is not so with the religious talents. In a worldly life they are almost absolutely disused. They are kept under, suppressed, allowed no range or play. According to the parable, they are wrapped up in a napkin and hid. Refusing to know God, to let your deep want receive him, to admit the holy permeations of his Spirit, to be flooded with his all-transforming love, to come into the secret discerning and acquaintance of his mind, and live in the mutuality of his personal fellowship, you command all these higher talents of your soul to exist in disuse.

X And this process of extirpation will be hastened, again, by the operation of that immense overgrowth or over-activity which is kept up in the other powers. Thus it is that gardeners, when a tree is making wood too fast, understand that it will make no fruit; all the juices and nutritive fluids being carried off in the other direction, to make wood. And therefore, to hasten the growth of fruit, they head in the branches. So when trees are growing rapidly upward, as in a forest, that growth calls away the juices from the lower and lateral branches and leaves them to die. A healthy limb of our body, being checked by some disease, the other limbs or members call off the nutriment in their direction; when it begins to wither, and, at last, is virtually extirpated.

Just so it is, when a child becomes preternaturally active in some particular faculty, under the stimulus of success or much applause; it turns out finally that the wonderful activity that made him a prodigy in figures, or in memory, unless early arrested, has sunk him to a rank as much below mediocrity in every thing else. His overgrowth in arithmetic, or in the memorizing powers, takes away the nutriment of all his other functions, and leaves him to a miserable inferiority.

Just so it is, again, when the pursuit of money grows to a monster passion of the soul; the mind dwindles, the affections wither, and sometimes even the nerve of hunger itself ceases to act; leaving the wretched miser to perish by starvation, fast by his heap of gold. So if a man lives for the table, the organs of the mouth and chin change their expression, the eye grows dull, the gait heavy, the voice takes a coarse, animalized sound, and the higher qualities of intelligence, he may once have manifested, will be manifested no where, save as purveyors to the organs of taste and the gastric energy.

The child brought up as a thief, gets an infinite power of cunning and adroitness, and loses out just as much in the power of true perception.

In the same way, a race of men long occupied in ferocious wars grow sharp in the hearing, keen as the beasts of prey in pursuit, sensitively shy of death when it can be avoided, and when it can not, equally stoical in regard to it; but, while these talents of blood are unfolding so remarkably, they lose out utterly the sense of order, the instinct of prudence and providence, all the sweet charities, all the finer powers of thought, and become a savage race. Having lost a full half of their nature and sunk below the possibility of progress, we, for that reason, call them savages.

By a little different process, the Christian monks were turned to fiends of blood, without being savages. Exercised, day and night, in a devotion that was aired by no outward, social duties, waiting only on the dreams and visions of a cloistered religion, all the gentle humanities and social charities were absorbed or taken away. And then their very prayers would draw blood, and they would go out from the real presence itself, to bless the knife, or kindle the fire.

Now, just this extirpating process, which you have seen operating here on so large a scale, is going on continually in the overactive worldliness of all men that are

living without God. An extravagant activity of some kind is always stimulating their inferior and merely-natural faculties, and extirpating the higher talents of religion. Occupied with schemes that are only world-ward and selfish, there is an egregiously-intense activity in that direction, coupled with entire inaction in all the highest perceptions and noblest affinities of their godlike nature. To say that these latter will be finally taken away, or extirpated in this manner, is to say nothing which permits a doubt. It can not be otherwise.

X Is it wrong to assume that your religious sense was proportionately much stronger and more active in childhood than it is now? Thus onward, during your minority, you felt the reality of God and things unseen, as you can not now, by your utmost effort. It is as if these worlds beyond the world had faded away, or quite gone out. You have a great deal more knowledge than you then had; knowledge of books, men, business, scenes, subjects, a more practiced judgment, a greater force of argument; but it troubles you to find that these higher things are just as much further off and less real. It even surprises you to find that you are growing skeptical, without any, the least, effort to be so. Perhaps you begin, at times, to imagine that it must be only because of some fatal weakness in the evidences of religion. Why else should it lose its power over your mind, as you grow more intelligent? There is one very simple answer, my friends, to this inquiry; namely, that eyes disused gradually lose the power to see. If God gave you a religious talent, whereby to ally you to himself, an eye to see him and catch the light of unseen worlds, a want to long after him, and you have never used this higher nature at all, what wonder is it that it begins to wither and do its functions feebly, as a perishing member? If your bodily eyes had, for so long a time, been covered and forbidden once to see, what less could have befallen them? Your very hand, held fast to your side for only half the time, would be a perished

member. And what does it signify that your other faculties, or talents, have been growing in strength so plausibly? What could be the result of this selfish and world-ward activity, but a prodigious drawing off of personal life and energy in that direction? Hence it is that you grow blind to God. Hence that, when you undertake to live a different life, you get on so poorly and your very prayers fly away into nothingness, finding only emptiness to embrace and darkness to see.

All this, my friends, which I gather out of your own experience, is but a version practical of Christ's own words—take therefore the talent from him. It is being taken away rapidly, and the shreds of it will very soon be all that is left. Your religious nature will finally become a virtually-exterminated organ. Neither let it be imagined that, meaning no such thing, but really intending, at some future time, to turn yourself to God, no such thing will be allowed to befall you. It is befalling you, and that is enough to spoil you of any such confidence. Besides, it was not shown in the parable that the servant who disused his talent threw it away. He carefully wrapped it up, and meant to keep it safe. But it was not safe to him. His lord took it away, and the same thing is now befalling you. The purpose you have, at some future time, to use your talent avails nothing. It is going from you, and, before you know it, will be utterly, irrecoverably gone.—*H. Bushnell, D. D.*



JERUSALEM SINNERS.

"Beginning at Jerusalem." LUKE XXIV, 47.

AT the village of Bersham, near which I reside, there is a foundry for casting cannons; and after they are cast, they are tested by the founders, who first of all put in a single charge; and if they bear that, then a double charge; and if they bear that without bursting, they are pro-

nounced fit for the deck of a man-of-war or the battle-field. And the casters act wisely and safely; for should there be a flaw in these engines of war, it is better it should be detected in the foundery-yard than when in the act of being fired against the foe. The Gospel was a *new* and an *untried* instrument. It was first to be tested; and where, on the face of the whole earth, was there a more fitting place than Jerusalem for making the first experiment? If the Gospel proved itself *instrumentally* equal to the conversion of the sinners at Jerusalem, no misgivings could ever afterward be entertained respecting its fitness to do execution in the lands of the Gentile. Peter was the man appointed to test this new gun. He charged and fired it. *Three thousand were converted in one day.* After this triumphant trial the fishermen of Galilee went forth every-where "boldly to preach the Word," fully assured that in no quarter of the globe were there to be found more hardened sinners than those who had stoned and killed the prophets, and who had reached the climacteric of guilt by putting to death the Heir of heaven himself. Well might the great apostle of the Gentiles declare his readiness to preach the Gospel in Rome, knowing it was the "*power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*" He was not ashamed of what had so often proved itself a power.—*Rev. W. Williams, of Wales.*

WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR CHRIST?

"Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 CORINTHIANS VI, 20.

ARE we doing as much as we should do, as much as we might do, to enlarge his kingdom, and advance his glory? Or are we rather trying how little we can do, and yet retain the name and reputation of his disciples? Judging by their actions, this would seem to be the ignoble aim of some of his professed adherents. They are not

willing to do any thing which is not positively required of them. They inquire, "Is this necessary? Can not I be a Christian without that? How much shall I be expected to give?" What unworthy questions! what miserable calculations!

In conversing with a friend to foreign missions, he said, "I have often asked myself what I ought to give to the missionary society; but I have recently been thinking and asking myself, WHAT OUGHT I TO KEEP?"

Have you ever felt the happiness which springs from a loving and beneficent spirit? Can you sympathize with Henry Martyn, who, after carrying some grapes to allay the feverish thirst of a dying sailor, exclaimed, "How great the pleasure of doing good, even to the bodies of men!"

Then you will gladly seize every opportunity of usefulness that you meet with. You will strive to help others as much as you can. You will be desirous to add fresh jewels to the Redeemer's crown; and to succor those poor and suffering disciples of his, about whom he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

What, then, are you doing for Jesus? DOING! Yes, true compassion does not end in words or terminate in feeling, but it leads to prompt and bounteous deeds. If you see a brother or sister naked, and destitute of daily food, you will not merely say to them, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," but you will give them those things which are needful. You will assist them, as well as pray for them.

There was a poor Christian man, who depended for support upon his daily labor. His wife became ill, and not being able to pay for a nurse, he was obliged to stay at home to attend to her, and was thus deprived of his weekly earnings. Having a wealthy neighbor near, he determined to go and ask for two bushels of wheat, with a promise to pay so soon as his wife was sufficiently

recovered for him to return to his work. Accordingly he took his bag, went to his neighbor's, and arrived while the family were at morning prayers. As he waited, he heard the father praying very earnestly that God would feed the hungry, relieve the distressed, and comfort all that mourned. The prayer concluded, the poor man made known his business, and promised to pay with the proceeds of his first labors. The farmer was very sorry he could not accommodate him, for he had promised to lend a large sum of money, and had depended upon his wheat to make it out; but he had no doubt that somebody else would let him have it.

With a tearful eye and a sad heart, the poor man turned away. As soon as he had left the house, the farmer's little boy went to him and said, "Father, did n't you pray just now that God would feed the hungry, and take care of the poor?"

"Yes; why?"

"Because, father, if I had your wheat, I would answer that prayer."

The boy's father called back his suffering neighbor, and gave him as much as he needed.

Now, are your prayers *practical* prayers, dear reader? Is your charity that which expresses itself in kind actions as well as in kind wishes? Do you love, not in word only, but in deed and in truth? Are you asking—earnestly asking—from day to day, "Lord, what wilt thou have me *to do*?"

Do you reply, "O, it is so little that I can do for Jesus; with such poor abilities, and such limited means, I can never hope to be of much use in the world?"

Well, you are not asked to do some great thing; you are asked only to do what you can. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

A laborer was returning home from his work. He stooped and picked up a large stone that lay in the way

of passing wheels, and cast it out of the road. That stone might have been struck by somebody's wheel, to the discomfort of the traveler, and perhaps the injury of his vehicle. It was kind and thoughtful in the man to remove it.

Now, are there not some stones that *you* might pick up in the world; some stumbling-blocks in the way of duty that you ought to remove out of a brother's road; some impediment to peace and joy that you could take away from the home of a sorrowful neighbor? There is a young friend of yours, perhaps, who is hindered from becoming a Christian by some mistaken ideas which he has conceived respecting the way of salvation, or the doctrines of the Gospel; is it not possible that you might, if you were to try, change those wrong conceptions of his, and clear his pathway to the Cross? Or there is a timid believer who worships in the same sanctuary with you, whose peace of mind is often disturbed by the apprehension of trouble, or the fear of death; could not you, by telling of God's faithfulness, and encouraging him or her to trust more simply to Jesus, help such a one to get rid of these distressing thoughts?

Never mind how small the stone is which annoys your fellow-pilgrim; if you can push it out of the way, be sure to stop and do so. Think not the time or trouble mispent which makes his journey pleasanter to him in future, although you may even wonder to yourself that he should ever have fretted his spirit over such a trifle. Troubles, after all, are as they are felt; so that difficulties which appear very minute to one person, may look much greater to another. Besides, the tiniest pebble that gets into your shoe may cause considerable irritation, especially if you have to walk far with it.

"A lady of middle age, and by no means deficient in understanding," writes a venerable clergyman, "once consulted me on a strange subject—she doubted whether women had souls. Her distress affected me; I saw and pitied

poor human nature in its ruins. Most of her friends smiled at this conceit, and regarded it as too absurd for grave examination. But it *troubled*—which the scratch of a pin may do, no less than a violent blow. I went to the Bible at once, and produced eighteen direct proofs. There was an end of her difficulty, and her mind regained its peace.” How wise and considerate was that minister’s conduct! He did not think it beneath him to pick up so diminutive a stone as this, but gladly attempted to displace the object of her annoyance. He felt with the apostle, that those who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. (Romans xv, 1.) If you will follow him, as he thus followed Christ, you will find plenty of opportunities for usefulness in this vexed and discomforted world of ours; plenty of stones which you may gather out of rough and troublous paths.

Every one may, if he chooses, do something for Jesus—something to make others better and happier. A traveler in Asia Minor, in a time of distressing drought, found a vase of water under a little shed by the road side for the refreshment of weary travelers. A man in the neighborhood was in the habit of bringing the water from a considerable distance, and filling the vase every morning, and then going to his work. He had no motive to do this but a kind regard for the comfort of thirsty travelers, for he was never there to receive their thanks, much less their money. His was true benevolence.

Great talents or great resources are not the indispensable adjuncts of great usefulness. The humblest Christian may be one of the most successful laborers for Christ. God often blesses the simplest instrumentalities to the conversion of sinners and the instruction of his own people. “One word,” said a pious man to a friend, “was the means of my conversion.” “What word was it?” “It was the word ETERNITY. A young Christian friend who was anxious for my salvation, came up to me at a

meeting, and, with great solemnity and tenderness, simply whispered 'Eternity' in my ear. That word made me think, and I found no peace till I came to the Cross."

And it is said to have been a single remark of Charles Simeon's in regard to the blessings which had resulted from the labors of Dr. Carey, in India, that first arrested the attention of Henry Martyn to the cause of missions. His mind began to stir under the new thought; and the perusal of the life of Brainerd fixed him in his resolution to give himself to his Redeemer, in the service of preaching the Gospel to the heathen.

A youthful minister, now a missionary, was once at the close of a funeral service sitting next to a young lady who was apparently altogether careless about religion. He inquired of the stranger if she were a Christian. She replied, "No, I am not." Deeply interested in her spiritual welfare, he again asked, "*Why not?*" That question was the arrow of conviction to her heart. "A still small voice" in her thoughtful moments repeated, with startling earnestness, "*Why not?*" She had thought that there might be reasons for her becoming a Christian; what reasons there were for her continuing *impenitent* she had never considered. She gave herself up a "living sacrifice" to her Savior, and is now telling in a foreign land the story of his love.

O, if young Christians were but faithful in *little things* to their Redeemer and Lord, how many stars might they add to his crown!

OLD GRIM.

"Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint." PROVERBS XXV, 19.

AMONG the dogs forming the sledge-draggers of the party connected with the Grinnell expedition to the Arctic regions, in 1853, '54, '55, was one called Old Grim. He

was a regular Newfoundlander, and a great hypocrite. Dr. Kane hits his portrait off thus: "He so wriggled his adulatory tail as to secure every one's good graces, and nobody's respect. He was never known to refuse any thing offered or approachable, and never known to be satisfied, however prolonged or abundant the spoil. Somehow or other, when the dogs were harnessing for a journey, 'Old Grim' was sure not to be found; and upon one occasion, when he was detected hiding away in a cast-off barrel, he incontinently became lame. Strange to say, ever since this he has been lame every day, except the days when the dog-team is away. Cold disagrees with Grim; but by a system of patient watchings at the door of our deck-house, accompanied by a discriminating use of his tail, he became at last the one privileged intruder. My seal-skin coat has been his favorite bed for weeks together. Whatever love for an individual Grim expressed by his tail, he could never be induced to follow him on the ice after the cold darkness of the Winter set in; yet would he wriggle after you to the very threshold of the gangway, and bid you good-by with a deprecating wag of the tail, which disarmed resentment. When a journey was to be taken, and Grim must go, we had to put a rope around his body and drag him off. Thus fastened to the sledge, he was very obstinate and ferocious."

Such as was Old Grim are many Church members in action. When nothing is to be done, they are ready to do every thing, and are agreeable and good natured to the last degree; but when something is really to be done, with a look of complaisance they bow and scrape, and talk large, and do nothing. You approach them about the support of the preacher—"O yes, the preacher ought and must be supported." You ask for a subscription—"I intend to do something, and so does my wife; but we will both attend to it by and by. We can't do it now." A church is to be built, and you make an application to a third—"O yes, the church must and ought to be built, and we are desirous to help in the matter." But they postpone it with many

fair speeches, never doing any thing. A special meeting is proposed or begun, and all of the Church members seem to agree in regard to its propriety. But the men who make much talk are not to be found at work. They stay at home because it snows, or because they are tired, or because somebody has called, or because some member of the family is a little ailing, or because of something else, and the meeting goes on, if it goes on at all, without the help of its talkers. If these men are ever brought to action, is it too much to say that they are brought to it as Old Grim was, with a rope around their bodies, and their pious brethren pulling at the other end?

THE CRAG OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." ACTS XVI, 31.

A POOR man, whose mind was much perplexed by the simple question, What is saving faith? dreamed a dream, which seemed to explain it to him. He thus related it to a Christian minister: "I thought that I stood in some desolate spot, on the very edge of a steep cliff. Below, at a great depth, the sea was dashing violently against the bottom of the cliff. I stood with only half a footing on the edge, when in a moment, something, I knew not what—could not imagine what—whirled me over the precipice, and I felt myself falling and falling downward into the ocean beneath; but suddenly—how, I can not tell—I thought I caught hold of a crag on the side of the cliff as I was falling past it, and there I hung, with one hand grasping a small piece of rock. I hung a few seconds, and then I felt that the crag was crumbling in my fingers, or breaking away from the side. What was I to do? The next second I must fall and be dashed to atoms. All at once I turned and looked behind me, and I saw a figure, dressed in pure white, coming toward the cliff, and walking

on the water. He came nearer and nearer, till he stood just underneath where I was hanging, and although the distance downward was great, yet I thought I could see the expression of his countenance, that it was a kind and gentle one; I could even see that our eyes met, and instantly I heard him whisper softly upward to me, 'Let go! let go!' I let go, and fell into his arms and was saved." The poor man understood his dream thus; the crag was self-righteousness, and every false refuge that crumbles in the grasp of the sinner; he who came walking to him on the water, was Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and the words, "Let go," were the same as the words, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Faith is the letting go of all other dependence, and falling into the arms of Christ.

Fellow-sinner, may God help you *now*, since no time must be lost, to "*let go!*" The crag crumbles; the billows roar and yawn underneath you; the next moment they may be your grave. Then say to him who is at hand and ready to save you,

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Savior and my all."



THE LIGHT-HOUSE.

"Ye shine as lights in the world." PHILIPPIANS II, 15.

"WE remember," says one, "to have read a traveler's conversation with the keeper of the light-house at Calais.

"The watchman was boasting of the brilliancy of his lantern, which can be seen ten leagues at sea, when the visitor said to him, 'What if one of the lights should chance to go out?'

"'Never! impossible!' with a sort of consternation at the bare hypothesis.

“‘Sir,’ said he, pointing to the ocean, ‘yonder, where nothing can be seen, there are ships going by to every part of the world. If to-night one of my burners were out, within six months would come a letter—perhaps from India—perhaps from some place I never heard of—saying that such a night, at such an hour, the light of Calais burned dim; the watchman neglected his post, and vessels were in danger. Ah, sir! sometimes on the dark nights, in the stormy weather, I look out to sea, and I feel as if the eye of the whole world were looking at my light! Go out! burn dim! no, never!’”

Was the keeper of this light-house so vigilant; did he feel so deeply the importance of his work, and his responsibility; and shall Christians neglect *their* light, and allow it to grow dim? Grow dim, when, for need of its bright-shining, some poor soul, struggling amid the waves of temptation, may be dashed by the waves of destruction? No—by no means! Hold forth the Word of life! This is the way to recommend religion; this is the way to bless your generation; this is the way to honor your Savior; and, I may add, this is the way to assist and encourage your minister. “Holding forth the Word of life,” said the apostle—why?—“that I may rejoice in the day of Christ; that I have not run in vain, nor labored in vain.” Labored in vain! The lovely lives of the pious bring down upon the seeds scattered by the pious pastor a rain of righteousness.

O, how much has been lost by our neglect! How few have been reprov'd by our Christian deportment—how many have derived a license to sin from our untender walk—how little have we done for Him whose praises we expect to shout forever and ever! “Let past ingratitude provoke our weeping eyes.” What if we had wantonly put out the light of a light-house, and, as a consequence, many vessels, with their crews, had gone to pieces on the rocks? We could weep *then*. But have we not, in a spiritual sense, *done* this, by allowing the bright-

ness of our Christian character to be thus obscured? Have we not reason to fear that by remissness in duty, our unfaithfulness to our Lord, many souls have been wrecked for eternity, who are now, and ever will be, amid the breakers of fire—

“For sadder sights the eye can know
Than proud bark lost, or seaman’s woe,
Or battle-fire, or tempest-cloud,
Or prey-bird’s shriek on ocean’s shroud—
The shipwreck of the soul.”

O, resolve, disciples of Jesus, to “hold forth the Word of life!” The world expects it of you. Angels expect it of you. God the Father expects it of you. The blood of Calvary expects it of you.



ANSWER OF JEANNIE, THE SCOTCH MAIDEN.

“Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” JOHN VI, 68.

DIFFICULTIES there are in the Christian religion, but where shall we find fewer? Mysteries there are, but where shall we go where there are none?

Can sinful, suffering, and dying man *find* a system that will better meet his condition? Where will he turn to find a better system? Will he go to heathenism? But would he find any sacrifice there for sin which for purity, and dignity, and efficacy would compare with that of the Son of God? Will he, then, consent to blot out all that Christianity has done for society, and place the race again in the condition of the Caffrarian or the Bushman? Does he suppose that the evils of the world would be mitigated by a return to that condition in which man was before the light of Christianity dawned on it? Will he turn to the ancient philosophers? And does he suppose that they can explain the mysteries of his being, and provide a better deliverance, than has been done by Him whom the

Father has sent into the world? Let him become an Epicurean or a Stoic. Does he escape from the perplexities which he has been accustomed to associate with Christianity? Do not the Epicurean and the Stoic sin, and suffer, and die; and do not men sin, and suffer, and die all around them? Will he turn to the modern philosopher, or the modern infidel? Do they propose a better way by which a guilty conscience may become calm; by which life's sorrows may be borne, and by which the pangs of death may be more patiently or triumphantly endured? Or does he escape from any of the mysteries and perplexities which encompass this subject when associated with Christianity? Do no other men but Christians die? Do they have no trouble of conscience? Are they never sick? Did not Paine, and Volney, and Hume die? And have they left any *recipe* by which death can be more calmly met and *better* borne than it was by Stephen, and Paul, and Halyburton, and Baxter, and Wesley, and Fletcher, and Payson?

"Jeannie," said a venerable Cameronian to his daughter, who was asking his consent to accompany her urgent and favored suitor to the altar, "Jeannie, it is a very solemn thing to get married." "I know it, father," replied the sensible damsel, "but it is a great deal more solemn not to." Here is the very gist of a large portion of the right philosophy of human believing and human acting. A less intelligent maiden would have undertaken to reason away the paternal objections; to show convincingly that it was all a mistake; that in reality it was a very light and commonplace thing—merely a matter of course, to get married. The shrewd Jeannie does no such thing—her perceptions are too clear; she accepts her father's statement of the solemnity of marriage in its fullest extent, and then turns the tables on him by reminding him of the deeper solemnity of the other alternative.

There are few things in human life in which the arguments are, like the conclusions of mathematics and the

handle of a jug, all on one side. Most doctrines and duties have to be decided by a *balancing* of conflicting evidence. It is not, therefore, enough that you have examined the considerations in favor of ■ thing, without having also weighed the testimonies against it; not enough that you discover grave difficulties in a case, till you also inquire whether there are not still graver difficulties in its opposite. It may be a very solemn thing to take a particular step, or to believe a particular doctrine, and yet a much more solemn thing not to. It is a solemn thing for a man, endowed with rational and immortal faculties, to take upon himself the responsibilities of a citizen, of a husband, of a parent, of an important profession or office, but if he has the qualifications, or the power of acquiring them, it is a much more solemn thing not to. The heavenly Master will not exact beyond the talents which he has intrusted to his stewards, but within that limit he makes rightful and rigorous exaction. It would have been a serious business for the servant with the one talent to have gone to trading with his lord's money, but it proved a much more serious business to bury it in the earth. We may fly to the desert to escape responsibility, but the act of so flying involves the heaviest of responsibilities.

The belief in the existence of a God has its difficulties, of which human wisdom finds no solution; but the denial of such existence is liable to all these objections, and to innumerable others. Christianity has its difficulties, but the difficulties of infidelity are infinitely greater. There emerges no absurdity so monstrous as that which follows upon the assumption that the records of the Bible are a dream, or an imposture, that the vast structure of Christianity which towers up amidst the glories of our modern civilization is baseless. If, then, it is a solemn thing to be a believer in God, it is a much more solemn thing to be an atheist. If it involves a large power of faith to believe the Bible, it demands a much larger capacity of credulity to disbelieve it. In the pride of your intellect

you may refuse to believe what your grandmother believed, and become the victim of errors which your grandmother might have refuted.

THE TRUANT PLAYERS.

"If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." PHILIPPIANS III, 4-6.

YOUR morality is not holiness. It was not in the case of the young ruler whom, on that account, Jesus loved; it was not in the case of Saul of Tarsus, who said of himself as above, referring to his character before his conversion, "touching the righteousness which is in the law, *blameless*." It is not in your case. It is another thing altogether than religion. Your morality relates to man; not to God. It has, in your own mind, even, no reference to God. It leads you to no act of devotion to him; to no prayer, to no desire to learn his will, to no worship in your family or in your closet. You do not yourself, even, pretend on this account to be a *religious* or *pious* man. You do not profess to be; you do not ally yourself to those who are pious; you do not expect to be ranked among their number; you would be surprised if you were—either by man or God. You would either receive it as a witticism if you were called a *saint*, or would regard it as intended to be an insult. You have never pretended to perform the proper act of a *religious* man; and you would be greatly surprised if a religious man should address you as a brother believer. Your morality is very valuable in some respects, but it has a very limited sphere considering all your relations; and, though amiable in itself, it may exist in connection with other things that are far from being amiable. Will you suffer me to show you, by a very plain illustration, how this is? A

company of boys are playing on a common. They are blithe, merry, and happy. They are kind to each other, and true to each other, and faithful to each other. If one falls into danger, all are ready to help him; if one is unfortunate, all sympathize with him; if one is prospered, all rejoice. They do not steal from each other; they do not slander each other; they do not cheat each other. If one makes a promise to another it is faithfully kept; if a bargain is made, the most scrupulous rules of honesty are observed. *But they are all truants.* They have broken away from the restraints of home; are there contrary to the wishes of their parents, and in direct violation of their commands. They refuse to return home at the time when they are commanded to; and if at home they manifest no regard for a parent's will or comfort. What do you think of them? Does their system of morality among themselves prove that they love their parents, or are entitled to the favor of their parents? Does it prove that they are not to be regarded as *truant*, and treated accordingly? Suppose that one of them is charged with disobedience to his parents. "O," says he, "we are very kind, and honest, and truthful among ourselves. I have injured no one of my playmates; I am esteemed to be honorable and upright; I am among them strictly moral." Exactly so; but how does this prove that he is not guilty of crime against a parent? Just as much, fellow-sinner, as your morality proves that you are not a sinner in the sight of God—and no more.

In the way of salvation in the Gospel, it is assumed that your amiable traits of character are not holiness, and that they can not be construed as religion. Why should they be any more than the innocence of the lamb, or the gentleness of the dove? They have no more reference to religion in your own mind; they do nothing to *make* you religious. They do not lead you to prayer, or to a religious life, or to the worship of God, or to the love and imitation of the Savior—more meek, and gentle, and

amiable by far than you can pretend to be; nor do they lead you to prepare for the world to come. Besides, you may not be as amiable as you think you are. Others may see things in you which you do not see; and God may see more than all. Your real character may have been little tested, and you may yet be in circumstances where you yourself may be surprised to find how much pride, and envy, and irritability, and perverseness, and petulance, and selfishness, there was lurking in your own soul.

In the way of salvation in the Gospel, it is assumed that your personal accomplishments are not religion; and that they do not prove that you have any holiness of heart. It assuredly does not demonstrate that you are a child of God, whatever praises it may elicit from men, if you can sing well, or dance well, or play well on an instrument of music; if you are fitted to adorn the most polished circles, or if by the grace of movement, or the charms of conversation, you attract the admiration of all. Some of these things are well in their way, and are desirable, and some are not; but why should any one deceive himself in regard to them? They are not religion; they can not be made *to be* religion.—*Albert Barnes.*

THE RIFLEMAN ON THE COTTON BALE.

"One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you." JOSHUA XXIII, 10.

IN Parton's Life of Andrew Jackson, the statement is made that the Americans had three severe engagements with the British at New Orleans—the first, December 23, 1814; the second, January 1, 1815; and the third, the great and decisive conflict, January 8th. It was found after repeated experiments that trenches of not more than three feet in depth could be dug without the appearance of water, and hence, at the suggestion of a Frenchman, two thousand bales of cotton, lying in a schooner just opposite, destined

for Havana, were brought out and used by the Americans for the sake of elevating their breastworks. The British, on the other hand, piled up barrels and hogsheads of sugar as their finishing touches of fortification. The experiments on the part of both parties failed. The cotton was set on fire by the British hot shot, causing a stifling from the smoke and smoldering that was intolerable, and the balls from the American cannon went straight through the hogsheads of the enemy, sugar and all, dealing wonderful destruction. Subsequently the Americans removed their cotton bales and the British their sugar barrels and hogsheads.

A cavalry officer of the British forces, in a narration of the incidents of the 1st, says that at a certain hour of the day, when one of their divisions was arraying for an attack, his eye caught in the distance the solitary figure of a rifleman standing on one of the highest of the cotton bales. An old hat, with a rim falling partly over his face, was on his head, and in his left hand his rifle. Presently he and his fellow-soldiers saw the rifleman throw up the ragged rim of his hat, at the same time poising his gun. "We all smiled," said the officer, "as the fellow aimed in our direction. Even should his ball reach so far as we thought, it could only fall harmless at our feet. He took aim, there was a flash and a report, and at the same instant a member of our cavalry near me fell from his horse mortally wounded. We began then to see that taking aim by the rifleman was an introduction to death of some one of our number. You may be sure there were some misgivings of heart as to the next who should fall. Again the man on the cotton bale threw up the rim of his old hat, raised his rifle to his eye and fired, and another of our number fell dead from his horse. A third shot came in our direction, doing execution as before. There was a panic among our men. The strange figure of that western rifleman made us wonder and quail, and kept our men distracted till the hour for any effective sally in that direction was gone."

That rifleman went out of the usual way of doing things. He adopted a plan extraordinary in attacking the enemy. His move may not have had the sanction or come to the knowledge even of the officers of the American army; but he did a good work, and kept off the enemy. We want men in the Church who are willing to climb with rifle in hand on to the cotton bales. We want men, no matter whether they be laymen or preachers, who are willing at times to proceed out of the ordinary routine, if need be, of aggressive action, and who are willing, single-handed and alone, to attack the opposing line of the enemy. Oftentimes, directed by the Holy Spirit, the Christian rifleman may put a whole army to flight.

THE WESTERN RESERVE INFIDEL.

"And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth; and all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God." DEUTERONOMY XXVIII, 1, 2.

In a small village on the Western Reserve there lived an influential, strong-minded infidel; he was a tiller of the earth, and an officer of the State; he was moral and thrifty, sober and diligent, his habits having been acquired in a Christian family before his change of views on religious subjects. His excellences seemed to give him great power, and it was not surprising that they should secure for him an extensive influence among the youth. In a short time he had the satisfaction of finding himself surrounded by fellow-infidels. As his hope of salvation rested chiefly upon his moral conduct, he was very kind and benevolent to the poor. Finding, however, that the drafts upon his resources were becoming more and more numerous, he started the inquiry how it happened that, while all around was prosperity, his neighborhood should be getting more

and more thriftless. In prosecuting this investigation he visited all his neighbors, and was startled to learn that in every house where the Bible was found there was no want, and in every abode where the Bible was absent there was present or approaching poverty. Not long after there came into his village an itinerant preacher, who proposed to hold a protracted meeting. His place of preaching was an old school-house. Here he addressed the people who assembled night after night. He was an able, eloquent, and faithful minister of the new covenant; he presented the truth with such power that it reached the hearts and troubled the consciences of his hearers. Those who were skeptical became demon-like, and began to produce disturbances among the auditors, and to offer insults to the speaker, who, having appealed in vain to their sense of justice, character, and propriety, at length dismissed them by saying that he felt that he had done his duty to them, and, seeing that they put the Gospel from them, he would turn to those who would receive it with more respect. The next morning, while preparing to start away, he was visited by the infidel 'Squire, and urged in the most cordial manner to remain and continue his meeting. To this solicitation he yielded. In the evening he went to his accustomed place of worship, and found his usual congregation, whom he addressed as faithfully as before; but when he had concluded his discourse he found the disturbance about to be renewed, when his infidel friend, who this evening had been seated just below him, rose and addressed the assembly, saying in substance, "This man must be treated with respect; the law can and shall protect him. Infidel as I am, I believe he is doing a good work. I have been abroad among you, and I find that you who revere the Bible live in prosperity; you who despise it are approaching pauperism, if not actually in distress. I am alarmed at what I have done; I have made you infidels, but in doing so have I not ruined you? Many of you are young men of good minds; I have a family of daughters, but I had rather follow them all to

the grave than to see them united in marriage to you. Henceforth I will be the friend of the Bible; it is the instrument of good."—*E. Thomson, D. D.*

FIRE IN THE GRASS.

"Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." JAMES III, 5.

WHEN I was a boy at school in the country, I went one day on an excursion with a schoolmate, to visit a cascade in the woods about a mile and a half from where we lived. It was a beautiful day in the Spring. The snow was all gone from the open fields, and the sun was shining bright and warm. It seemed like Summer, but it was not Summer. There were no leaves yet on the trees, and the grass was not green. The grass that grew the year before had died and turned brown, lying under the snow all Winter; and the blades of fresh grass were just beginning to peep up through the tufts of brown. The sun had been so warm that the dead grass was very dry, and it occurred to me as we walked up through the pasture toward the woods that it would be good fun to have a little bonfire of the grass. My schoolmate, if I recollect aright, said that it was not our pasture, and he thought we had better not burn the grass, but I persuaded him. We sat down on the slope of the hill, and gathered several handfuls of the grass and the leaves together, and I took out some matches from my pocket and lighted the little heap. There was a fine breeze blowing, and it fanned the little flame into a bright blaze. We heaped on more grass, and it burned higher and broader every moment. Then the fire began to spread in every direction. Of course it did not spread very fast against the wind; up over the hill and toward the woods, it ran very fast. Whenever the flames came to a very thick tuft they burst up hot and high, and spread thence in every direction. At first we thought it was grand fun, and chased

the flames and threw on leaves; but soon we found it was spreading so fast that we were alarmed. I had heard of fires on the prairies and fires in the woods burning farms, and barns, and houses, and I began to be afraid the fire would get into the woods and burn over the country. Then we tried to put it out by stamping on it. But one might as well try to stop the waves on the sea-shore from rolling, by treading on them. The more we stamped the more it flashed, and sparkled, and spread. We pulled off our coats to whip it, but the smoke choked us and blinded us, and we found we could not stop it. We saw it spreading in every direction like a huge circle in the water. It spread down the hill, creeping slowly against the wind; it spread out each side, and up the hill it ran fast with the wind toward the woods. Then we saw how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

We called for help. Some men and boys who lived near came to see what was the matter. The owner of the pasture was at work, it happened, in a meadow away down in a valley. He saw us or heard us and came too. He was a very kind man. I recollect that when he saw what mischief we had been doing, he did not say a word. He saw we were sorry for having set the fire on his land, and that we had been trying to put it out. So he ran to the edge of the woods and cut some bushes, both large and small, some for the men and some for the boys. They each took one and commenced beating the fire. We helped as well as we could. They began where it was spreading the fastest, for if it could be stopped there the rest could be easily managed. They worked hard a long time, and finally the fire gave up the contest and went out. It left the whole hill-side black with the ashes and cinders.

When it was all over I told the owner that I was very sorry that I had done such a wrong thing as to set fire on his land, and he cautioned me never to do so again.

When we set that little handful of grass on fire, we did not think it would make such trouble and danger; but

you see, my young reader, that when one begins to do wrong, you never can tell where it will end. A very little action, if it is wrong, no matter how little it is, is great enough to cause great mischief.

THE CLOUD AT SEA.

"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." ISAIAH XLIV, 22.

A FEW Summers since I was in a small sail vessel on Lake Erie, just in sight of the harbor of Cleveland. For some weeks the weather had been dry and cloudless. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, and while looking toward the horizon, where the sky and waters met, a cloud discovered itself. It grew suddenly dark and large, and shortly afterward the faint rolling of thunder was heard. The rain fell rapidly and the cloud disappeared almost at once from the face of the sky, and out shone the sun brighter than ever. I thought of the words of Micah, "He will turn again; he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; he will cast our sins into the depths of the sea." Once dark, but now bright; once cloudy, but now cloudless, the believer's heart can rejoice in the assurance that the sunshine of Jehovah's love is his in time and in eternity.

SLEIGHING IN A CIRCLE.

"But they, comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." 2 CORINTHIANS X, 12.

"Thy word is a light unto my path." PSALM CXIX, 105.

MANY years since, during one of our Northern Winters, several deep snows fell consecutively, till all the usual way-marks of fences were hidden underneath its leveling masses. Then a freezing rain succeeded, and a crust was formed of

sufficient strength and thickness to bear upon its surface both traveler and conveyance. This state of things was followed by a season of the most intense cold ever known in that part of the country, during which a farmer was returning home from a distant market-town.

The long night of midwinter closed in, and he was still at some distance from the termination of his journey, when he discovered that he had lost his way. Every moment the severity of the weather seemed to increase, while, benumbed and wearied, the more he examined his surroundings the more confused he became.

At last he discovered the marks of some previous traveler on the crisp and icy crust, and heard in the distance the sounds of other sleigh-bells. "Now," he said to himself, "I am in the track of some one who has preceded me. I will follow him and be safe."

Watching closely, looking downward, he soon perceived the number of tracks to increase, giving him the assurance that he was in a beaten road. Though the piercing wind seemed to reach his very heart, this thought gave a new impetus to his exertions. On, on he pushed his panting and chilled horses, but, though their hoofs flew over the frozen surface, there was still no vestige of his home. Where could he be? A sense of stupefaction was creeping over him, which he well knew was but the precursor of a deeper sleep. Again he rallied. Why did he not near his journey's end? There were the numerous lines made by other sleighs—still sounded the bells in advance. He must be in the right path while following so many others.

And now surely his mind was wandering. Was that a concomitant of freezing to death? All things about him appeared ever the same. His brain reeled. At length, with the last effort of almost despair, he urged on his horses in an agonizing terror, and approached near enough to the traveler before him to call—

"Where are you going?"

"I am following you. Which way are you traveling?"

"I have been following in your tracks."

So, as keener and more piercing blew the fierce blasts of that Arctic night, had these lost travelers been for hours riding round and round a large circle in each other's wake! No wonder they had made no advance. No wonder the tracks increased. Now was explained that weird and mysterious sameness in surrounding objects, while the chill hour of midnight found them as far from their destination as its first deepening gloom.

Then all at once they recalled that, as their homes lay due northward, there was a bright star shining clear and steady in that direction, which had they remembered before, they might hours since have been safe within their warm shelter.

This thought inspired fresh life, and now, looking upward, they press on and soon see the welcome gleam of their firesides, where warmth and ease restore them. A little longer, and it would have been too late. Never do they recall their narrow escape, or look up in a Winter night, without the feeling often expressed, "Thank God for the North Star."

This incident is an apt illustration of the folly and danger of making the conduct of others, instead of the rules God has given us, our guide and standard.

"Do you visit your Sunday scholars?" asked a young teacher of another.

"Why, no," was the reply. "I can not find that any of the other teachers are in the habit of doing so," and thus many a precious opportunity is lost for making individual counsels more pertinent and direct.

"How is it that you do not maintain family prayer?" asked a faithful pastor of the head of a household.

"There are a good many members of this Church who do not, and who are more capable than myself," was the ready excuse, and so, following in the frozen wake of others, the religious temperature in a home filled with blessings falls to zero.

"Have you opened your Bible to-day?" whispers conscience, and is stifled with the reminder that men of business are so hurried, and, if a minute's leisure occurs—who ever saw a Bible in a counting-room? No wonder the ledger will not always bear the test of the golden rule.

A NEW HAMPSHIRE GIRL CONVERTED.

"We use great plainness of speech." 2 CORINTHIANS III, 12.

"The terrors of the Lord do set themselves in array against me."
JOB IV, 6.

MORE than forty years ago, in the midst of an interesting revival in one of the hill towns of New Hampshire, the pastor was led to inquire whether, as a faithful watchman, he presented to his hearers as fully and plainly as he ought "the terrors of the Lord," making the Bible his standard and rule. The inquiry led him to write a sermon from this text: "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

In the family of one of his deacons, near the house of God, lived a poor, ignorant, giddy, and thoughtless girl, who, in accordance with the customs of the family, regularly attended public worship, but could never tell any thing about the preaching or even the text. She did not know what the text was. One Sabbath morning, as she was about starting for meeting, they renewed their charge to be sure and *remember the text*. Well, she would try. As the minister rose to announce his text, one of the family sitting by her side said to her, "Now comes the text."

She looked and listened as he said, slowly and distinctly, "Matthew xxiii, 33. How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" It was an arrow that pierced her heart. She became greatly distressed. By day and by night her only inquiry was, how can *I* escape the damnation of hell? She looked earnestly to the minister and to Christian friends to save her from that dreadful end. She begged their prayers, and listened eagerly to their counsels, but

found no relief. After several days of deep agony she began to despair of help—thought herself given over of God, her minister, and her Christian friends. In this state of mind she retired to an outbuilding and sat down to reflect on her sad condition. After awhile it occurred to her that she had heard people say that God was merciful—that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. At once she fell on her knees and began to pray. How long she prayed, or what she prayed for, she could never tell. But when she arose every thing about her seemed changed. She hardly knew where she was. She went to the door, and soon made her way into the house. On the table lay a hymn-book, which she took up and opened. The first line that met her eye was,

“When God revealed his gracious name.”

She read on to the third verse—

“Great is the work, my heart replied,
And be the glory thine.”

She could hold her peace no longer, and began to exclaim—

“And be the glory thine!
And be the glory thine!”

And for several days after, when giving an account of the change, as she came to that line, she would pause, and exclaim with great emphasis—

“And be the glory thine!
Be the glory thine!”

It proved a genuine conversion. She became emphatically a new creature, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness. Have ministers at this day no occasion to inquire, Do I preach as fully and plainly as I ought the “terrors of the Lord?” Ought they not to remember that their congregations have minds of various make and education, and what will reach one will not another?

THE NAIL IN THE OAK.

"Is it not a little one?" GENESIS XIX, 20.

A LARGE oak-tree was recently felled in the grove adjoining Avondale, near the center of which was found a small nail, surrounded by twenty-nine cortical circles, the growth of as many years. The sap, in its annual ascents and descents, had carried with it the oxyd from the metal, till a space of some three or four feet in length and four or five inches in diameter, was completely blackened.

It was, I thought, a striking illustration of the effects of sin cherished in the heart. There may be no outward token of the corrupting influence within; the outside may be as fair, the reputation as spotless as the heart is black. "Is it not a little one?" the man may say when he first begins to love the forbidden thing; and then, before he is aware, it has become a power in him, poisoning the stream of his life, and spreading desolation in his heart. To the world, indeed, there may appear to be growth, but the world only sees the bark. There are concealed doors in the chambers of his soul, of the existence of which none but God and himself know, and which many times, perhaps in the agony of remorse, open and disclose to him the dire consequences of that single cherished sin. Perhaps he may become so accustomed to deluding others, as insensibly to delude himself—to look with complacency on the sepulcher beplastered with good works, forgetting that within it is "full of all uncleanness."

When he is cut off from the world, there may be no indication of the blackness and hollowness of the heart; he may go down to his grave attended by all the trappings of a death of respectability; obituaries may laud and magnify his good works; the funeral sermon may hold him up as a bright example of a consistent walk with God; pious friends may dry their tears in hope of a glorious resurrection.

But there is a time when he who "had a name to live and was dead" shall be exposed, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and man shall stand naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom he has to do. "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every SECRET THING."

THE SHIP IN THE STRAITS OF SUNDA.

"Why is the people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding?" JEREMIAH V, 8.

A BOSTON captain, in command of a fine ship, was returning home from China by the usual route, through the Straits of Sunda. The current in this narrow channel, and around the islands of the adjacent sea, runs very swiftly, so much so, that vessels sailing in the opposite direction, with a fair wind, may seem to be making very satisfactory progress, when in point of fact they are nearly stationary, if not actually going backward and losing ground.

On the voyage in question, it so happened that the master of the ship had gone below. The first officer, who was left in charge on deck, judging of the ship's rate of speed by the amount of canvas spread, and the force and direction of the wind, but not taking into account the opposing current, supposed all was right, when the captain, coming up again on deck, discovered that the ship was just off a lee shore and in imminent danger of being wrecked. A moment later and she would have been on the rocks, when all on board must have perished. As it was, she just rounded to in answer to her helm, and escaped. It was a narrow chance, such as no ship-master would care to run a second time.

Does not the position of this noble ship illustrate fearfully the situation of many a professor of religion in the community? They seem to be making very good progress

in the divine life. They are observant of all the outward duties of the Christian profession, and have their sails spread as if to catch "the favoring gales of the Spirit," and yet, making no account of the tide of worldliness on which they are borne, and which is hurrying past them, perhaps at the very moment when they think themselves safest, are nigh unto destruction. We are not perhaps aware how strong and swift is the current we are required to stem. The world sweeps almost every thing along with it. It requires a watchful eye, and the hand of the Master always upon the helm, to save us from present peril and bring us finally to the port of peace.

MY BOY REPROVING ME.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. . . . Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." PSALM LI, 10, 13.

ONE evening my little boy was lying on the bed, partly undressed. My wife and I were seated by the fire. She had been telling me that Theodore had not been a good boy that day, and what he had been doing, and I had reproved him for it. All was quiet, when suddenly he broke out into a loud sobbing and crying, which surprised us. I went to him and asked him what was the matter.

"I don't want it there, father; I don't want it there."

"What, my child, what is it?"

"Why, father, I don't want the angels to write down in God's book all the bad I've done to-day. I don't want it; I wish he would wipe it out," and his distress greatly increased.

What could I do? I did not believe, yet had been taught the way. I had to console him, so I said:

"Well, you need not cry. You can have it all wiped out in a minute if you want."

"How, father, how?"

"Why, get down on your knees and ask God, for Christ's sake, to wipe it out, and he will do it."

I did not have to speak twice. He jumped out of bed, saying:

"Father, won't you come and help me?"

Now came the trial. The boy's distress was so great, and he pleaded so earnestly, that the big man, who never bowed to God in spirit and in truth, got down on his knees and asked God to "wipe out his sins," and perhaps, although my lips did not speak it, I included my own sins too.

We then got up and he lay down on the bed again. In a few moments he said:

"Father, are you sure it is all wiped out now?"

O, how the acknowledgment grated through my unbelieving heart as the words came from my mouth:

"Why, yes, my son, the Bible says so, if you asked God for Christ's sake to do it, and if you are really sorry for what you have done."

A smile of pleasure passed over his face, as he quietly asked:

"What did the angels wipe it out with—with a sponge?"

Again was my whole soul stirred within me, as I answered:

"No, with the precious blood of Christ."

The fountain had at last broken forth. It could not be checked, and my cold heart melted within me. I felt like a poor, guilty, ignorant sinner, and turning away, I said:

"My dear wife, we must first find God if we want to show him to our children. We can not show them the way unless we know it ourselves."

After a little time the boy, with heaven almost looking out of his eye, came from his bed, and leaning on my knee, turned his face to mine, and said:

"Father, are you and mother both sinners?"

"Yes, my son, we are."

"Why," said he, "have you not a Savior? Don't you love God? Why are you sinners? God don't love sinners."

I answered as best I could, and in the silent hours of the night I bent in prayer over that dear boy and prayed, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief."

My wife would not pray with me over our boy till blessed again by God; the Lord's prayer was put into my heart, and we said it together, and prayed jointly for ourselves and for our child. And God heard our prayer, and received us as he always does those who seek him with their whole heart, for he said unto such, "They shall surely find me."

THE GLASS RAILROAD.

"Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." MATTHEW VII, 28.

WE recollect to have read a wild dream bearing this title. It was by a dissipated poet who at his own request was *imprisoned*, that he might not touch the cup of ruin.

He found himself in a car of glass, on a track of the same transparent material. The motion was easy and musical, and the passengers around him were gay. Suddenly his eye caught the glimpse of a dead body with its face upturned by the side of the way; then another, and still another, stained with blood and ghastly, receded rapidly as the cars flew onward.

With an exclamation of horror, he inquired what the terrible spectacle meant. A passenger replied, with a loud laugh of merriment, that at the end of the track was a *precipice*, over whose edge the train was dashed, to make way for another; and the bodies were laid along the road, to apprise the travelers of their own fate if they went on to the end of the pleasant journey, and whispered with

awful emphasis, "*This is the railroad of habit.*" The dreamer, notwithstanding this warning reverie, went over the edge of ruin, and filled a drunkard's grave.

But besides the fearful illustration the vision affords of the sorcery and devastation of intemperance, how forcible the application to general *impenitence*! The sinner glides along past graves, the lifted Cross, and through an atmosphere of prayer, on the smooth and seductive track of *habit*—neglecting the great salvation—hoping the charm will be broken, the *brakes* applied, and his soul saved. But he sees not, feels not the velocity and momentum of his course, till the verge of probation is reached: then a shriek comes back, at least to the ear of faith, and he *is gone*.

"His honors in a dream are lost,
And he awakes in hell."



"READY FOR EITHER."

"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things."
PHILIPPIANS III, 8.

AN efficient missionary association is said to have adopted not long since a device found on an ancient medal, which represents a bullock standing between a plow and an altar, with the inscription, "Ready for either—ready for toil, or for sacrifice."

The whole history of Christianity has proved that its great objects can not be secured without both the toil and the sacrifice. Says the Apostle, "*I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Church.*" In the agony of the atoning sacrifice, Jesus had no sharers. Of the people there were none with him. But he has left, unexhausted, enough of the bitter cup of his previous toils and trials to remind his followers amid their great work, what their salvation cost

him. A readiness for hard work on the one hand, and for sacrifices on the other, can alone evince, not only our attachment to his cause, but also *our love to him*. O, Christian, let the love of Christ constrain you to fidelity in his service. Bring all your talents, your acquisitions, your possessions, your energies, and, binding yourself to the horns of the altar, there stand, ready either for work or for sacrifice. This is the spirit which, under God, will conquer the world. This is the consecration at which heaven rejoices and hell trembles. Whether it be labor or suffering, doing or giving, living or dying, to which you are summoned, be ever able to say, "*Ready for either.*"



THE KERRY MOUNTAINEER.

"The sword of the Spirit is the word of God." EPHESIANS VI, 17.

A MISSIONARY lodged one night in the house of a gentleman among the mountains of Kerry, in Ireland. In the morning, as he stood beside his host, looking over the wild and beautiful country, they saw a shepherd tending some sheep at a little distance. The gentleman pointed him out to the missionary.

"There is Peter," said he, "one of the shrewdest men we have in the district."

Then the missionary went up to him, and entered into a conversation, and gave him a tract in Irish. A few weeks after he and Peter met again.

"I have swallowed the tract," said the latter.

"If I give you an Irish Bible will you swallow that?"

"I won't be indebted for it, but I'll buy it."

"Well, I've got two or three."

"What is the price?"

"The price I ask is this: When God shall strike the light and love of it in your heart, that you will teach six men like yourself to love the Bible." And Peter took it.

Some time after, an Englishman, accompanied by the

missionary, started across the mountains. Just before them was Peter.

"Och!" said he, "but your riverence is welcome so early."

"Why, Peter, what are you doing here?"

"Sure, I'm doing honestly: I'm paying for the book."

And on the top of the mountain, where by this time it was broad daylight, he led them to a haystack, behind which there were six Roman Catholic men, away from the eye of the priest, waiting for Peter to teach them the Word of God.



LIVING TO PLEASE GOD.

"Ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God."
1 THESSALONIANS IV, 1.

THE question is not what *harm* a thing will do, but what *good* it will do. The question is not whether a thing, this or that, is *objectively* right or wrong, but what is the *subjective* intention. What do I *mean* or *intend* in what I do? Objectively, it is right to go to meeting; but subjectively, it is wrong, unless I mean to please God thereby.

If a man asks me what harm there is in what he is doing, I answer it is *all* harm or wrong in *you*, unless you mean therein to please God. Here is a person who gives himself to the study of music. He asks me, Is it not right to cultivate the fine arts? is it not right to study painting? is it not right to study music? What harm is there in it? what harm will it do? I answer, there may be no harm in it, it may do no hurt; but the question returns, what do you *mean* by it? what do you *intend* by it? In *you* it is all wrong, and all harm, unless you mean thereby to please the Lord and to serve him, unless you do it because you suppose that he requires it of you.

Many people seem to go no farther than this: They will do what will please themselves, and take it for granted that God does not object to it. They do not suppose that he

wants them to do it; they do not do it because it is his pleasure, and because they regard it as his pleasure that they should do it. This they can not believe. But it is *their* pleasure to do it, and they do it to please themselves, God not objecting, as they think. They never think of rising any higher than to avoid that which they think will displease God. But, positively, they never think of doing whatever they do because they *mean* to please him.

Now, in all this negative religion there is not one particle of *acceptable* service rendered to God. There is nothing in it but self-pleasing after all. It is only a modified form of selfishness. It is just that kind of philosophy that teaches that men are to seek their own interest and their own pleasure as an end, but in so doing not to interfere with the rights of others. They do not care to please God, but to please themselves. But they hold that in pleasing themselves they should not displease God. But the fact is, they always do displease God unless they positively mean to please him. His requirements are positive, that we should live and walk so as to please him; that is *designing* to please him, making this our supreme and ultimate end in all that we do.

We sometimes see children set their hearts upon going somewhere, and their parents dislike to have them go, and yet they do not like absolutely to refuse. They dislike to say no because other young people are going. The children are very anxious to go to please themselves. The parents do not think it is wise; they would greatly prefer that their children should not go, but upon the whole they reluctantly consent. They do not like to restrain them too much. Now, the children go, knowing at the same time that their parents would have preferred that they should not go, but that they gain but the reluctant consent of their parents to go. They know their parents would have been much better pleased if they had cheerfully and willingly remained at home.

Now, a great many professors of religion treat God just

in this way, with this difference, however, that God had not given his consent. They go, in fact, without his consent. They can not believe that God really wants them to go. They do not go because they think that God *desired* them to go. The deep impression is on their minds after all that in going they have not the consent of their heavenly Father. Yet they are set upon pleasing themselves. So they will, and their determination to go is almost always prefaced by the question, Why, what harm is there in it after all? What can there be wrong about it? What evil will it do? And then they think, why, *ministers* do so—ministers' children do so—every body's going; why, what harm is there in it? And thus they go with the multitude to serve themselves.

Now, this is nothing but real disobedience to God. There is no religion in any such course of conduct as this in any case whatever. And I am really afraid that after all this is the religion of great multitudes, to avoid doing harm, while at the same time they aim at supremely pleasing themselves.

Religion greatly simplifies the aims of life. When once the whole being is consecrated to God there is really but one great question to ask—Will this please God? The question is not whether it will please this one or that one. We are then disentangled from the meshes of worldly influence and the fear of man, and can act with simplicity, with singleness of aim. Instead of continually troubling ourselves with what this one or that one will think, what this or that one wishes us to do, how this or that will please or displease man, we have only one question to ask—Will it please God? And this question is generally very easily answered. In almost every thing the way is so plain that the wayfaring man, though a fool, can not err therein.

Who would engage in dealing in intoxicating drink, intending thereby to please God? Who would get up theaters, intending thereby to please God? Who would attend them, and spend their time and money, intending

thereby to please God? Who would engage in very many branches of business, intending thereby to please God? No one, surely, for every body knows that God would not call upon any man to engage in such business and to do such things.—*President Finney.*

“CLOSE TO THEM.”

“The good shepherd calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.” JOHN X, 3.

SAID Gen. Havelock, in reply to a remark of a friend as to his influence over the men of his regiment, “I keep close to them—have personal contact with each man, and know each man’s name.”

He who has ends, and particularly good ends, to gain with his fellow-men, will find their accomplishment greatly facilitated by coming into personal contact with them. Every man who wishes to establish a business must see and converse with those whose patronage he would secure; it will scarcely avail to distribute reams of paper circulars, if he himself stays at home. The teacher must form the acquaintance of parents, if he would have their children in his school. And the politician must not only harangue the crowd at arm’s length—his chances of success are almost always to be measured by the degree in which he is personally acquainted with them. Almost always the best method with a person who has offended one, is to seek an interview with him, and let explanation be given and objections answered face to face.

The unbounded influence which Napoleon exercised over his soldiers, was due not only to the confidence they felt in his military genius, but to the marvelous accuracy and minuteness of his acquaintance with them. It was not his influence upon them in a mass, but the degree of his personal contact with them.

Here is the secret of power. Great geniuses may be

powerful without it; but plain men, when they are possessed of good social qualities, and of judgment in using them, rival them in their practical, working influence upon their fellow-men; while the power of a great genius will be largely enhanced by the addition of such qualities. All this is essentially true of the work of the preachers among men. Sinners will not be converted while they are kept at arm's length. The faithful shepherd calleth his own sheep by name. The measure of the Church and the ministry's power over men, is in general exactly proportioned to their degree of personal contact with them. It is not enough to harangue them. We can hardly call that preaching which springs from an ambition to address them in a mass, dissevered from an interest in them in detail and as individuals. True preaching, evangelical preaching, finds themes and draws its directness and point from pastoral observation, and then carries the preacher, with fresh impulse, back to the sphere of personal labor again. Evangelical preaching is the distant artillery which thunders at the frowning fortress, and rains its iron storm upon it till a breach is made in the walls, and the way is clear for a hand-to-hand conflict, a rush to the battlements, and the planting of the victorious standard upon the walls.



MERCY IN SEVERITY.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son he receiveth." HEBREWS XII, 6.

IN the Scriptures, alternating with the whispers of mercy, the thunders of judgment resound. The terrors of the Lord are as thickly strewed on the surface of the Word as his invitations; but it would be an inexcusable and fatal misreading of the Spirit's mind to combine these two so that they should neutralize each other, and leave upon a human heart the vague impression that there is in the Bible about as much to drive us back, as to draw us near. There

are in the Word kind, encouraging invitations ; so far you will acknowledge. But there are also many stern denunciations, and those you think greatly modify the mercy of other parts. These are the crowning marks of mercy. A shepherd foreseeing a snow-storm that will drift deep in the hollows of the hill, where the silly sheep seeking refuge would find a grave, prepares shelter in a safe spot, and opens the door. Then he sends his dog after the wandering flock to frighten them into the fold. The bark of the dog behind them is a terror to the timid sheep ; but it is at once the sure means of their safety, and the mark of the shepherd's care. Without it the prepared fold and the open entrance might have proved of no avail. The terror which the shepherd sent into the flock gave the finishing-touch to his tender care, and effect to all that had gone before it. Such precisely in design and effect are the terrible things of God's Word : not one of them indicates that he is unwilling to save sinners. They are the overflowings of the Divine compassion. They are sent by the good Shepherd to surround triflers on the brink of perdition, and compel them to come into its provided refuge, ere its door be shut. The terrors of the Lord are not the salvation of men ; but they have driven many to the Savior. No part of the Bible could be wanted ; a man shall live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.—*Rev. W. Arnot.*

THE SYMMETRICAL CHRISTIAN.

"Put on the whole armor of God." EPHESIANS VI, 11.

DEVELOPING and dwelling forever upon one faculty or function, we dwarf the others. Men who do nothing but preach from the pulpit, very often have wild boys and girls. Men who attend exclusively to the development of muscle usually have small minds—Liliputian souls. Those who have seen portraits of Thomas Sayers and John C.

Heenan, the pugilists, will remember how gross and unexpressive their features—there being scarcely any more intelligence in them than in so much putty. A tree should be fairly grown all around, rather than send out one tremendous branch to the south, and have only rotten twigs in every other direction; better, even though that tremendous branch should be the very biggest that ever was seen. Such an inordinate growth in a single direction is truly morbid. By subjecting a goose to a certain manner of life, you dwarf its legs, wings, and general muscular development, and make its liver grow enormously. We have known human beings who practiced on their mental powers a precisely-analogous discipline. The power of calculating in figures, of writing poetry, etc., was tremendous; but all their other faculties were like the legs and wings of the fattening goose.

Kindred to the theme are the words of a writer in an English magazine: "If you think long and deeply upon any subject, it grows in apparent magnitude and weight; if you think on it too long, it may grow big enough to exclude the thought of all things besides. If it be an existing and prevalent evil you are thinking of, you may come to fancy that if that one thing were done away, it would be well with the human race: all evil would go with it. I can conceive the process by which, without mania, without any thing worse than the workable unsoundness of the practically-sound mind, one might come to think as the man who wrote against stopping thought. For myself, I feel the force of this law so deeply, that there are certain evils of which I am afraid to think much, for fear I should come to be able to think of nothing less and nothing more."

It is well enough for a Christian to believe the temperance cause a good cause, the Sabbath school, the classroom, the prayer meeting, all good and essential things—but he must not in his zeal for the one neglect and override all the rest.

THE TELEGRAPH WIRES.

"Without me ye can do nothing." JOHN XV, 5.

SEE those electric wires that are shooting their mysterious threads throughout our land, communicating between city and city, between man and man, however distant; dead, yet instinct with life; silent, yet vocal with hidden sound; carrying as with a lightning burst the tidings of good or evil from shore to shore. Separate their terminating points by one hair's breadth from the index, or interpose some non-conducting substance, in a moment intercourse is broken. No tidings come and go. The stoppage is as entire as if you had cut every wire in pieces, and cast these pieces to the wind. But refasten the severed points, or link them to the index with some connecting material, and instantaneously the intercourse is renewed. Joy and sorrow flow again along the line. Men's thoughts, men's feelings, men's deeds, rumors of war or assurances of peace, news of victory or defeat, the sound of falling thrones, the shouts of frantic nations—all hurrying on after each other to convey to ten thousand throbbing hearts the evil or the good which they contain!

That non-conductor is *unbelief*. It interposes between the soul and all heavenly blessing, all divine intercourse. It may seem a thing too slight to effect so great a result; yet it does so inevitably. It shuts off the communication with the source of all glad tidings. It isolates the man, and forbids the approach of blessing.

That conductor is *faith*. In itself it is nothing, but in its connection every thing. It restores in a moment the broken communication; and this, not from any virtue in itself, but simply as a conducting link between the soul and the fountain of all blessing above.

The blood of the cross is that which has "made peace;" and to share this peace God freely calls us. This blood of the cross is that by which we are justified; and to this jus-

tification we are invited. This blood of the cross is that by which we are brought nigh to God; and to this blessed nearness we are invited. This blood of the cross is that by which we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace; and this redemption, this forgiveness is freely set before us. It is by this blood that we have liberty of entrance into the holiest; and God's voice to each sinner is, "Enter in." It is by this blood that we are cleansed and washed; and this fountain is free, free as any of earth's flowing streams, free as the mighty ocean itself, in which all may wash and be clean.

This is good news concerning the blood—news which should make every sinner feel that it is just what he stands in need of. Nothing less than this; yet nothing more.—
Rev. Horatius Bonar, D. D.



WIDE-AWAKE CHRISTIANS.

"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." MARK XIII, 37.

WE are carrying a nature whose prime characteristic is susceptibility to influence. It is true that man is a creator, and, in a very low sphere, like God in that. But man is at least, as yet, far more a recipient than he is an actor. We accept ten influences where we set in motion one. Much as we do, more is done to us. We receive a thousand effects where we are capable of producing one.

We carry, too, a voluminous nature, every part of which is alike susceptible. We are branched on every side with faculties exquisitely susceptible of influence. The whole world is striving, and moving about us and upon us. And no man can prevent dents and scratches, unless he looks before and provides beforehand. If a man allows his body to come into collision with rock, or tree, or hedge, or wall, it is too late for him to avoid injury. He should have kept off. We protect the eye, the nerve-woven skin; we learn to be vigilant without volition for the body, and even when

absorbed in thought there is yet a subtile piloting of the body by the mind, I know not how; we see the stone without seeming to see it; we avoid the ditch without knowing that we noticed it; we lift the foot with a regulated gradation to meet the varying surface of the road quite unconsciously; we instinctively discern the qualities of things, and accommodate ourselves to them. Sharpness or bluntness, softness or hardness, fluidity or solidity, heat or cold, perpendicularity or horizontalness, nearness or distance—these all, and many more qualities, are discerned, and by a kind of involuntary watchfulness of the body, we go safely around thousands of dangers, every one of which, had we struck it full and centerwise, would have destroyed us. We are always alert and watchful when carrying the body among its ten thousand adversaries. This is the only way for the body. Danger must be avoided, and not healed in its effects. Life is not long enough to afford time to patch up all the mischiefs which would ensue if one did not foresee and avoid danger.

But the soul is more sensitive than the body. It has a greater surface, it has more branches, it has more arms and feet, it has more nerves, it has more injurable attributes, than the body. It carries them, too, amid flying missiles, countless, endless, in succession. When the fire touches gauze it is too late then to interfere; you must not let it touch it. When the rap is given to the crystal vase, it is too late then to save it; you must keep it free from the blow. When the frost has struck the flower, watching is then remediless; you must keep it where the frost can not reach it. We must keep sensitive things free from rude contacts. That is true wisdom in practical life. And so of hundreds of moral things. We must keep them away from evil, so that it shall not overtake them. A man must carry himself, not so as to repent of harm, but so as, by constant vigilance and forethought, to prevent harm from befalling him.

And when this task respects the whole soul, and all its

tenuous, invisible, super-sensitive faculties, how much more important is pre-vigilance! It was this that Christ incorporated into that universal prayer—"Lead us not into temptation." To be sure, "deliver us from evil" when it has befallen us; but before that, as if it stood prior and more important, "*Lead us not into temptation.*" No man can tell what he shall do in the day of temptation. Keep out of it and away from it.

Society is full of the organizations of the human mind. When men have cherished a love for money, and have been actuated by it till generations have seen the results of this instinct, commerce stands out as the organization of it. Justice is organized into various laws and institutions. Leaves are organized into different forms and usages of domestic life. Every thing in a man's soul that has in it any operative force, represents itself in organizations from without. And as the soul, in the first place, creates these things, and has power upon them, so secondarily they react upon the soul itself. The same feelings that a man has to watch within him, he has also to watch in the things by which they are represented outside of him, in society. These feelings are returned upon us in the shape of customs, usages, sympathies, public sentiments, and what not. And the mischief is that we live in an atmosphere fraught with dangerous elements which we can not see.

Malarias are dangerous because they do not address themselves to any sense. We can put up lightning-rods to ward off thunderbolts, but no man can put up rods that will protect him from a poisonous atmosphere. You can drain morasses that you can see, but you can not free the atmosphere above it from impurities you can not see. The sweetest and most beautiful days in New Orleans are those in which death strikes most terribly there in times of pestilence. It is on such days that it is the most insidious. It has no visible or perceptible exponent. It can not be detected by sight or by touch. And that is what makes it so dreadful.

Now, we are walking in a malarial atmosphere all the

time, not one that attacks the body, not one that penetrates the heart, not one that congests the liver, not one that crazes the brain, but one that infects the soul. The soul is poisoned all the time by pride, vanity, the love of money, greed, competitions, rivalries, and the various other noxious elements by which it is surrounded.

Do you know what the Campagna of Rome is? Says John Ruskin, the greatest of living writers on art: "Perhaps there is no more impressive scene on earth than the solitary extent of this great plain under evening light. Let the reader imagine himself for a moment withdrawn from the sounds and motion of the living world and sent forth alone into this wild and wasted plain. The earth yields and crumbles beneath his foot, tread he never so lightly, for its substance is white, hollow, and carious, like the dusty wreck of the bones of men. The long knotted grass waves and tosses feebly in the evening wind, and the shadows of its motion shake feverishly along the banks of ruin that lift themselves to the sunlight. Hillocks of moldering earth heave around him, as if the dead beneath were struggling in their sleep. Scattered blocks of black stone, four square, remnants of mighty edifices, not one left upon another, lie upon them to keep them down. A dull purple, poisonous haze stretches level along the desert, veiling its spectral wrecks of massy ruin, on whose rents the red light rests like dying fire on defiled altars. The blue ridge of the Alban mount lifts itself against a solemn space of green, clear, quiet sky. Watch-towers of dark clouds stand steadfastly along the promontories of the Apennines. From the plain to the mountains the shattered aqueducts, pier beyond pier, melt in the darkness, like shadowy and countless troops of funeral mourners, passing from a nation's grave."

Human life is one vast Campagna, and there are in the atmosphere around about men silent corrupting forces of which they are quite unconscious. And nothing but the inward spiritual vigilance will make man a match for these things.

When we come in contact with men we do not know what they leave upon us. I have noticed that when spiders spin their webs in bushes they leave none that you can see at midday. But the next day the dew that has lodged upon them reveals them, and then you can see that the bushes were covered with them. And the influences which men exert upon you, you can not see when you receive them. It is only when they are subsequently revealed in your life that you become aware of them.

With this vigilance prayer is to be joined. When fleets near the coast at night, they give and receive signals. It is not enough that light-houses warn them of danger; so they throw up rockets as signals, to be answered by other signals from the land. Now, I think these signals are much like our prayers and the answers to them which we receive. God has set light-houses of promises all through the Bible; but we want something more than these; so he permits us to throw up rockets of desire; and he signals back to us. Therefore watch and pray.

Watch; for the time is short. The days make haste. The hours fly swifter than any meteoric body that ever astonished the world by its fleetness. Watch; for it will be but a few days before you will put your foot upon the shore of the eternal world, when, with wide circumspection, you will see the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of that treasure which awaits you there; and when all the tears, and all the strifes, and all the watchings of earth, will seem to you as nothing, the meanest price, to pay for such endless dignity and glory.



THE ICY END OF THE PLANK.

"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the Gospel's sake." 1 CORINTHIANS IX, 22, 23.

"ONE day when I was serving my apprenticeship in a factory on the banks of the Merrimack River," says the

Hon. N. P. Banks, late Governor of Massachusetts, "a party of the hands saw a man a quarter of a mile down the river, struggling among the broken cakes of ice. We could none of us for the moment determine his political complexion or bodily color, but he proved, in the end, to be a negro in the river. Of course the first care was to rescue him; but twice the victim slipped from the plank that was thrown him. The third time it was evident to our inner hearts that it was the negro's last chance, and so he evidently thought, but as he again slipped from the board, he shouted, 'For the love of God, gentlemen, give me hold of the wooden end of the plank this time.' We had been holding him the icy end."

How often do Christians make the same mistake! Paul was all things to all men, that he might by all means save some. But we, forsooth, often stand upon our dignity, and bear ourselves loftily through the world, as though we thought any other demeanor would be unbecoming; and it would be difficult for any one to discover that there is any Christian love in us. We turn the icy end of the plank to our fellows, and then wonder why they do not hold on, and why our efforts do not save them.



THE ART OF GROWING POOR.

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." PROVERBS XI, 24.

SOME professors of religion spend more money for oysters each year than for the missionary cause; others give more for tickets to lectures, concerts, new bonnets, etc., than for the preacher. They are always of the kind who complain the most about the Church, the quality of the sermons, and the coldness of the membership. Giving nothing or next to nothing for the Lord, they find life an awkward thing to them—seldom paying with promptness their debts, or accumulating any thing in the way of prop-

erty. As with individuals so with Churches. In refusing to give they bring barrenness and deadness on themselves. Said one of the most eminent of laymen once making a platform missionary address: "I have heard of Churches starving out from a saving spirit; but I have never heard of one dying of benevolence. And if I could hear of one such, I would make a pilgrimage to it, by night, and in that quiet solitude, with the moon shining and the aged elm waving, I would put my hands on the moss-clad ruins, and gazing on the venerable scene, would say, *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!*"

THE SINGING AND THE SERMON.

"Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." EPHESIANS v, 19.

A HYMN sung lifelessly just before a preacher begins to preach has the effect frequently of killing him before the time. A drag—a break—a discord—a minor-keyed or funeral tune—none but those who have preached under the circumstances can tell how like pounded ice they fall on the heart. On the contrary, a song from the heart—a melody that speaks to the inward man—how like an invisible giant of love it lifts the soul and body! A minister in Vermont was once called from home to officiate for a Sabbath in a cold and dreary church. When he entered it the wind howled, and loose clapboards and windows clattered. There was no stove; a few persons in the church were beating their hands and feet to keep them from freezing. He asked himself, "Can I preach? Of what use can it be? Can any of these few people sing the words if I read a hymn?" He concluded to make a trial, and read,

"Jesus, lover of my soul."

"They commenced," remarks he in narration, "and the sound of a single female voice has followed me with an

indescribably-pleasing sensation ever since, and probably will while I live. The voice, intonation, articulation, and expression seemed to me perfect. I was warmed inside and out, and for the time was lost in rapture. I had heard of the individual and voice before; but hearing it in this dreary situation, made it doubly grateful. Never did I preach with more satisfaction to myself; and from this incident I learned two lessons—first, the importance of the voice and heart speaking together; and, second, never to be discouraged from unfavorable appearances, but, where duty calls, go to work cheerfully, without wavering.”

ALL NIGHT IN THE SNOW.

“Thou shalt find the Lord thy God if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.” DEUTERONOMY IV, 29.

You have tried once, twice, five, even twenty times, and you say no light has come. You have asked Christian people, over and over again, to pray for you, and, “I have prayed for myself, O so many times and so fervently.” Perhaps you have; but how near you may be even now to the kingdom! One more effort, and you may stand in a broad place. A man was traveling from home, in midwinter, in a sleigh. Through the afternoon a heavy fall of snow came on. As twilight gathered round, the storm became furious and blinding. His heart failed him in his efforts to reach the house of a friend, and in the gloom and stupor of the hour he unfastened his horse, and, turning over his sleigh, made with his buffalo robe a place of rest underneath for the night. What was his surprise, crawling out next morning, numbed, hungry, and half frozen, to discover that he had turned his sleigh against the very wall of his friend’s house! They had not heard him, and he, unwilling to make any further effort for the night, had almost the same as concluded to die rather than make another effort.

Dear friend, traversing your way toward the heavenly country, have you not yielded too readily to despondency, and have you not let go striving just when one effort more would have admitted you to the mansion-house of your King and Savior? Once more

"Lift up thy streaming eyes to heaven,
And all thy sins shall be forgiven."

THE UNIVERSE BELOW US.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." MATTHEW X, 29, 31.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows." LUKE XII, 6, 7.

INFINITY lies below us as well as above us. There is as much essential greatness in littleness as in largeness. Mont Blanc—massive, ice-crowned, imperial—is a great work of nature; yet it is only an aggregation of materials with which we are thoroughly familiar. So with the sea: it is only an expanse of water larger than the river that winds through the meadows. It is great, but it is only an aggregate of numerable quantities that my eyes can measure, and my mind comprehend. These are great objects, and they are great particularly because they are large. They are above me, and they lead me upward toward creative infinity.

If I turn my eyes in the other direction, however, I lose myself in infinity quite as readily. If I pick up a pebble at the foot of Mont Blanc, and undertake the examination of its structure—the elements which compose it, the relations of those elements to each other, the mode of their combination—I am lost as readily as I should be in following the footsteps of the stars. If I undertake to

look through a drop of water, I may be arrested at first, indeed, by the sports and struggles of animalcular life; but at length I find myself gazing beyond it into infinitude—using it as a lens through which the Godhead becomes visible to me. I can dissect from one another the muscles, and arteries, and veins, and nerves, and vital viscera of the human body, but the little insect that taps a vein upon my hand does it with an instrument and by the operation of machinery which are beyond my scrutiny. They belong to a life and are the servants of instincts which I do not understand at all.

I remember a venerable gentleman of Buffalo—Doctor Scott—who did very great things in a very small way. At the age of seventy he became conscious of decaying power of vision. Being professionally a physician and naturally a philosopher, he conceived the idea that the eye might be improved by what he denominated a series of “ocular gymnastics.” He therefore undertook to exercise his eyes upon the formation of minute letters—working upon them till the organs began to be weary, and then, like a prudent man, resting for hours. By progressing slowly and carefully, he became, at last, able to do wonders in the way of fine writing, and also became able to read the newspapers without glasses. At the age of seventy-one, he wrote upon an enameled card with a stile, on a space exactly equal to that of one side of a three-cent piece—the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, the Parable of the Ten Virgins, the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, The Beatitudes, the fifteenth Psalm, the one hundred and twentieth Psalm, the one hundred and thirty-third Psalm, the one hundred and thirty-first Psalm, and the figures “1860.” Every word, every letter, and every punctuation, of all these passages was written exquisitely on this minute space; and that old man not only saw every mark he made, but had the delicacy of muscular action and steadiness of nerve to form the letters so beautifully

that they abide the test of the highest magnifying power. They were, of course, written by microscopic aid.

The most difficult thing a man can do may not be the most useful, or in any sense the most important; but it will measure and show the limits of his power. Work grows difficult, as it goes below a man, quite as rapidly as it does when it rises above him. It costs as much skill to make a dainty bit of jewelry as it does to carve a colossal statue. It actually costs more power to make the chain of gold that holds the former, than it does to forge the clumsy links by which the latter is dragged to its location. Thus, whether man goes down or up, he soon gets beyond the sphere of his power. The further he can carry himself in either direction the more does he demonstrate his superiority over the majority of men. The more difficult the task which he performs the further does he reach toward infinity.

In the town of Waltham, Massachusetts, there is a manufactory of watches which I have examined with great interest. It is here undertaken to organize the skill which has been achieved by thousands of patient hands, and commit it to machinery; and it is done. Every thing is so systematized, and the operations are carried on with such exactness, that, among a hundred watches, corresponding parts may be interchanged without embarrassment to the machinery. The different parts are passed from hand to hand, and from machine to machine, each hand and each machine simply doing its duty, and when from different and distant rooms these parts are assembled, and cunning fingers put them together, every wheel knows its place, and every pivot and every screw its home, though it be picked without discrimination from a dish containing ten thousand. Yet among these parts there are screws of which it takes one hundred and fifty thousand to make a pound, and shafts and bearings which are so delicately turned that five thousand shavings will only extend a lineal inch along the steel. This is the

way American watches are made, and this is the way in which the highest practicable perfection is reached in the manufacture of these pocket monitors.

Here we have small work, organized, and great elaboration of related details. When Dr. Scott wrote his passages on the card, his work was very simple. He did only one thing,—he made letters. When he had made letter after letter till the little space was filled, his work was done. It was not a part of some complicated and inter-dependent whole, related to a thousand other parts in other hands. I suppose it may be as delicate work to drill a jewel with a hair of steel, armed with paste of diamond-dust, as to write "Our Father" under a microscope; but when the jewel has to be drilled with relation to the reception of a revolving metallic pivot, the process becomes very much nicer. So here are a hundred processes going on at the same time, in different parts of a building, all related to each other, each delicate almost beyond description, and effected with such precision that a mistake is so much an exception that it is a surprise. I have seen the huge steam-engines at Scranton which furnish power for the blast of the furnaces there, and their magnitude, and power, and most impressive majesty of movement have made me tremble; yet as works of man they are no greater than a Waltham watch.

It seems to me that man occupies a position just half way between infinite greatness and infinite littleness, and that he can neither ascend nor descend to any considerable degree without bringing up against a wall which shows where man ends and God begins. It seems, too, that that kind of human power which can reach down deepest into the infinite littleness is more remarkable than that which rises highest toward the infinite greatness. It is a more difficult and a more remarkable thing to write the Lord's prayer on a single line less than an inch long, than it would be to paint it on the face of the Palisades, upon a line a mile long, in letters the length of the painter's

ladder. I have heard of a watch so small that it was set in a ring, and worn upon the finger; and such a watch seems very much more marvelous to me than the engines of the Great Eastern.

We are in the habit of regarding God as the author of all the great movements of the universe, but as having nothing to do directly with the minor movements. Ralph Waldo Emerson becomes equally flippant and irreverent when he speaks of a "pistareen Providence." We kindly take the Creator and upholder of all things under our patronage, and say, "It is very well for him to swing a star into space, and set bounds to the sea, and order the goings of great systems, and even to minister to the lives of great men, but when it comes to meddling with the little affairs of the daily life of a thousand millions of men, women, and children—pshaw! He's above all that."

Not so fast, Mr. Emerson! The real reason why you and all those who are like you do not believe in God's intimate cognizance and administration of human affairs is that you can not comprehend them. You have not faith enough in God to believe that he is able to maintain this knowledge of human affairs, this interest in them, and the power and the disposition to mold them to divine issues. You are willing to admit that God can do a few great things, but you are not willing to admit that he can do a great many little things. It is well enough, according to your notion, for God to make a mastodon or a megatherium, but quite undignified for him to undertake a musketo or a horse-fly. It would not compromise his reputation with you were you to see Him lighting a sun, or watching with something of interest the rise and fall of a great nation, but actually to listen to the prayer of a little child, and to answer that prayer with distinctness of purpose and definite exercise of power, would not, in your opinion, be dignified and respectable business for a being whom you are proud to have the honor of worshiping!

I do not know how these people who do not believe in the intimate special providence of God can believe in God at all. I can conceive how God could rear Mont Blanc, but I can not conceive how he could make a honey-bee, and endow that honey-bee with an instinct—transmitted since the creation from bee to bee and swarm to swarm—which binds it in membership to a commonwealth, and enables it to build its waxen cells with mathematical exactness, and gather honey from all the flowers of the field. It is when we go into the infinity below us that the infinite power and skill become the most evident.

The little bird that sings to me, the bee that bears me honey, the blossom that brings me perfume, all testify to me that He who created them will not neglect nor forget his own child. If I look up into the firmament, and send my imagination into its deep abysses, and think that further than even dreams can go those abysses are strewed with stars; if I think of comets coming and going with the rush of lightning, and yet occupying whole centuries in their journey; or if I only sit down by the sea, and think of the waves that kiss other shores thousands of miles away, I am oppressed by a sense of my own littleness. I ask the question whether the God who has such large things in his care can think of me—a speck on an infinite aggregate of surface—a moat uneasily shifting in the boundless space. I get no hope in this direction; but I look down, and find that the shoulders of all inferior creation are under me, lifting me into the very presence of God. I find that God has been at work below me in a mass of minute and munificent detail, by the side of which my life is great and simple, and satisfyingly significant.

It was a very forcible reflection to which a visitor at Niagara Falls gave utterance, when he said that, considering the relative power of their authors, he did not regard the cataract as so remarkable a piece of work as the Suspension Bridge; and it may be said with truth that

there is no work within the power of man so small that God has not been below it in a work smaller and possibly humbler still—certainly humbler when we consider the infinite majesty and the ineffable dignity of His character.—*Dr. J. G. Holland.*

THE SKEPTIC AND HIS SAW-MILL.

“Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.”
2 CORINTHIANS III, 2.

IN one of the New England States once resided an infidel, the owner of a saw-mill, situated by the side of the highway, over which a large portion of a Christian congregation passed every Sabbath to and from church. This infidel, having no regard for the Sabbath, was as busy and his mill was as noisy on that holy day as on any other. Before long it was observed, however, that at a certain time before service the mill would stop, remain silent, and appear to be deserted for a few minutes, when its noise and clatter would recommence and continue till about the close of service, when for a short time it again ceased. It was soon noticed that one of the deacons of the Church passed the mill to the place of worship during the silent interval; and so punctual was he to the hour that the infidel knew just when to stop his mill, so that it should be silent while the deacon was passing, although he paid no regard to the passing of others. On being asked why he paid this mark of respect to the deacon, he replied, “The deacon professes just what the rest of you do, but he *lives* also such a life that it makes me feel bad *here* [putting his hand upon his heart] to run my mill while he is passing.”

The life speaks when the lips are still. Who “walks in wisdom” walks in power. A temper corresponding with one’s profession is a weapon that none can resist.

CHRIST AT THE HOUSE OF SIMON THE PHARISEE.

"And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who, and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty." LUKE VII, 38-41.

TURN to this chapter and read from verse 36 to the close. The place is the city of Nain; the hour, noon; the characters, three—Jesus, Simon, and the woman—and, if we choose to add them, the other guests, who are silent spectators of what transpires.

Let us consider, first, the woman. She "was a sinner." This is all, in fact, that we know of her; but this is enough. The term "sinner," in this instance, as in many others, does not refer to the general apostasy in Adam; it is distinctive of race and habit. She was probably of heathen extraction, as she was certainly of a dissolute life. The poetry of sin and shame calls her the Magdalen, and there may be a convenience in permitting this name to stand. The depth of her depravity Christ clearly intimates in his allusion to the debtor who owed five hundred pence, and the language of Simon teaches that the infamy of her life was well understood among the inhabitants of the city. If a foreigner, she had probably been brought into the country by the Roman soldiers, and deserted. If a native, she had fallen beneath the ban of respectability, and was an outcast alike from hope and from good society. She was condemned to wear a dress different from that of other people; she was liable at any moment to be stoned for her conduct; she was one whom it was a ritual impurity to touch. She was wretched beyond measure; but while so corrupt, she was not utterly hardened. Incapable of virtue, she was

not incapable of gratitude. Weltering in grossness, she could still be touched by the sight of purity. Plunged into extremest vice, she retained the damning horror of her situation. If she had ever striven to recover her lost position, there was none to assist her; the bigotry of patriotism rejected her for her birth—the scrupulousness of modesty for her history. The night, that consecrated so many homes and gathered together so many families in innocence and repose, was to her blacker than its own blackness in misery and turpitude; the morning, that radiated gladness over the face of the world, revealed the extent and exaggerated the sense of her own degradation. But the vision of Jesus had alighted upon her; she had seen him speeding on his errands of mercy; she hung about the crowd that followed his steps; his tender look of pity may have sometimes gleamed into her soul. Stricken, smitten, confounded, her yearnings for peace gush forth afresh. It was as if hell, moved by contrition, had given up its prey—as if remorse, tired of its gnawings, felt within itself the stimulus of hope. But how shall she see Jesus? Wherewithal shall she approach him? She has “nothing to pay.” She has tears enough, and sorrows enough—but these are derided by the vain, and suspected by the wise. She has an alabaster box of ointment, which, shut out as she is from honorable gain, must be the product and the concomitant of her guilt. But with these she must go. We see her threading her lonely way through the streets, learning by hints, since she would not dare to learn by questions, where Jesus is, and stops before the vestibule of the elegant mansion of Simon the Pharisee.

Who is Simon the Pharisee? Not necessarily a bad man. We associate whatever is odious in hypocrisy or base in craft with the name Pharisee, while, really, it was the most distinguished title among the Jews. Many of the Pharisees were hypocrites; not all of them. The name is significant of profession, not of character. He could not have been an unprincipled, villainous man, or he would never have tendered to Jesus the hospitalities of his house.

Indeed, Christ allows him, in the sense of moral indebtedness, to owe but fifty pence. He was probably a rich man, which might appear from the generous entertainment he made. He was a respectable man. The sect to which he belonged was the most celebrated and influential among the Jews; and when not debased by positive crime, a Pharisee was always esteemed for his learning and his piety. He had some interest in Christ, either in his mission or his character—an interest beyond mere curiosity, or he would not have invited him to dine with him. He betrays a sincere friendliness, also, in his apprehension lest Christ should suffer any religious contamination.

The third person in the scene is Christ, who, to speak of him not as theology has interpreted him to us, but as he appeared to the eyes of his cotemporaries, was the reputed son of Joseph and Mary, the Bethlehemites; who by his words and deeds had attracted much attention and made some converts; now accused of breaking the Jewish Sabbath, now of plotting against the Roman sovereignty; one who in his own person had felt the full power of temptation, and who had been raised to the grandeur of a transfiguration; so tender he would not bruise the broken reed; so gentle, his yoke was rest; raying out with compassion and love wherever he went; healing alike the pangs of grief and the languor of disease; whom some believed to be the Messiah, and others thought a prophet; whom the masses followed, and the priests feared—this is the third member of the company.

The two last, with the other guests, are engaged at their meal, and in conversation. The door is darkened by a strange figure; all eyes are riveted on the apparition; the Magdalen enters, faded, distressed, with long disheveled hair. She has no introduction; she says nothing; indeed, in all this remarkable scene she never speaks; her silence is as significant as it is profound. She goes behind the couch where Jesus, according to Oriental custom, is reclined. She drops at his feet; there her tears stream; there the

speechless agony of her soul bursts. Observe the workings of the moment. See how those people are affected. Surprise on the part of Simon and his friends turns to scorn, and this shades into indignation. Jesus is calm, collected, and intently thoughtful. The woman is overwhelmed by her situation. The lip of Simon curls, his eye flashes with fire of outraged virtue. Jesus meets his gaze with equal fire, but it is all of pure, heavenly feeling. Simon moves to have the vagabond expelled; Christ interrupts the attempt. But the honor of the house is insulted. Yes, but the undying interests of the soul are at stake. But the breath of the woman is ritual poison, and her touch will bring down the curses of the law. But the look of Christ indicates that depth of spirituality before which the institutions of Moses flee away as chaff before the wind. Simon has some esteem for Jesus, and in this juncture his sensations take a turn of pity, spiced, perhaps, with a little contempt, and he says with himself, "Surely, this man can not be a prophet, as is pretended, or he would know who and what sort of woman it is that touches him; for she is a sinner; she is unclean and reprobate."

"Simon!" says Jesus, with a tone that pierced to the worthy host's heart, and arrested the force of his pious alarm—"Simon!"

"Sir, say on," is the reply of the Pharisee, who is awed by this appeal into a humble listener.

Whereupon Jesus relates the story of the two debtors, and, with irresistible strength of illustration and delicacy of application, breaks the prejudice and wins the composure of the Jew. "If, then," he continues, "he loves much to whom much is forgiven, what shall we say of one who loves so much?"

"See," he goes on, pointing to the woman, "See this woman—this wretch. I entered thy house; thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. She kisses my feet; she anoints them with ointment. Wherefore

I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much."

This scene, however inadequately it may be set forth, contains all that is sublime in tragedy, terrible in guilt, or intense in pathos. The woman represents humanity, or the soul of human nature; Simon, the world, or worldly wisdom; Christ, divinity, or the divine purposes of good to us-ward. Simon is an incarnation of what St. Paul calls the beggarly elements; Christ, of spirituality; the woman, of sin. It is not the woman alone—but in her there cluster upon the stage all want and woe, all calamity and disappointment, all shame and guilt. In Christ there come forward to meet her, love, hope, truth, light, salvation. In Simon are acted out doting conservatism, mean expediency, purblind calculation, carnal insensibility. Generosity in this scene is confronted with meanness, in the attempt to shelter misfortune. The woman is a tragedy herself, such as *Æschylus* never dreamed of. The scourging Furies, dread Fate, and burning Hell unite in her, and, borne on by the new impulse of the new dispensation, they come toward the light, they ask for peace, they throng to the heaven that opens in Jesus. Simon embodies that vast array of influences that stand between humanity and its redemption. He is a very excellent, a very estimable man—but he is not shocked at intemperance, he would not have slavery disturbed, he sees a necessity for war. Does Christ know who and what sort of a woman it is that touches him? Will he defile himself by such a contact? Can he expect to accomplish any thing by familiarity with such matters? Why is he not satisfied with a good dinner? "Simon!" "Simon!"

The silence of the woman is wonderful, it is awful. What is most profound, most agitating, most intense, can not speak; words are too little for the greatness of feeling. So Job sat himself upon the ground seven days and seven nights, speechless. Not in this case, as is said of Schiller's Robbers, did the pent volcano find vent in power-

words; not in strong and terrible accents was uttered the hoarded wrath of long centuries of misrule and oppression. The volcano, raging, aching, threw itself in silence into the arms of one who could soothe and allay it. The thunder is noisy and harmless. The lightning is silent—and the lightning splits, kills, consumes. Humanity had muttered its thunder for ages. Its lightning, the condensed, fiery, fatal force of things, leaped from the blackness of sin, threaded with terrific glare the vision of man, and, in the person of the woman, fell hot and blasting at the feet of Jesus, who quenched its fire, and of that destructive bolt made a trophy of grace and a fair image of hope. She could not speak, and so she wept—like the raw, chilling, hard atmosphere, which is relieved only by a shower of snow. How could she speak, guilty, remorseful wretch, without excuse, without extenuation? In the presence of divine virtue, at the tribunal of judgment, she could only weep, she could only love. But, blessed be Jesus, he could forgive her, he can forgive all. The woman departs in peace; Simon is satisfied; Jesus triumphs; we almost hear the applauses with which the ages and generations of earth greet the closing scene. From the serene celestial immensity that opens above the spot we can distinguish a voice, saying, “This is my beloved Son; hear ye him!”

THE RACERS IN THE AMPHITHEATER.

“Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” HEBREWS XII, 1, 2.

THIS picture is taken from an ancient amphitheater; the theaters of those days certainly had a better claim to be attended than the theaters of modern times; they had no

roofs; they were in the open air; the seats rose from the floor in successive circular tiers upward almost to the sky; the gymnasts, or wrestlers, or racers, were seen on the ground or arena below. The idea, therefore, of the apostle is, just as the racer, or the wrestler, or the runner in the foot-race was surrounded by some twenty thousand spectators, all looking down from concentric circles, to see how he would fulfill his mission, run his race, and who should gain the prize, so, says Paul, we Christians running this race are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. That passage leads us to infer that our dead, that we call so, in heaven, who really live, see and are interested in what those they have left behind are doing upon earth. We are surrounded by a cloud of spectators. They are looking down from the starry heights of heaven, along the steepes of glory, watching how you will acquit yourselves; waiting to see how you will triumph where others have failed; run while others have dropped down footsore and weary; and succeed where others have signally come short. But mark what is so beautiful in this passage: while we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, and are conscious of it, in order to run the race set before us, are we to look to them? If the apostle Paul had been a Roman Catholic, he would have said, "Seeing we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, those that are in heaven looking at us, let us run the race that is set before us, looking to Paul, to Peter, to John, to the Virgin, to our fathers, our mothers, our sisters, our brothers, who are all there." But Paul did not say so; he said, "Let us run the race that is set before us," consciously surrounded with all these millions of spectators looking down; let us run the race, but not looking to them—"looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." The Greek word is expressive: "Let us run the race that is set before us, *looking away* from the witnesses that surround us, and looking only and exclusively unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."—*John Cumming, D. D.*

THE TONGUE.

"The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." JAMES III, 8, 9.

THE deadliest poisons are those for which no test is known; there are poisons so destructive, that a single drop insinuated into the veins produces death in three seconds, and yet no chemical science can separate that virus from the contaminated blood, and show the metallic particles of poison glittering palpably, and say, "Behold, it is there!"

In the drop of venom which distills from the sting of the smallest insect, or the spikes of the nettle-leaf, there is concentrated the quintessence of a poison so subtle that the microscope can not distinguish it, and yet so virulent that it can inflame the blood, irritate the whole constitution, and convert day and night into restless misery.

In St. James's day, as now, it would appear that there were idle men and idle women, who went about from house to house, dropping slander as they went, and yet you could not take up that slander and detect the falsehood there. You could not evaporate the truth in the slow process of the crucible, and then show the residuum of falsehood glittering and visible. You could not fasten upon any word or sentence, and say that it was calumny; for in order to constitute slander it is not necessary that the word spoken should be false—half truths are often more calumnious than whole falsehoods. It is not even necessary that a word should be distinctly uttered; a dropped lip, an arched eyebrow, a shrugged shoulder, a significant look, an incredulous expression of countenance, nay, even an emphatic silence may do the work; and when the light and trifling which has done the mischief has fluttered off, the venom is left behind, to work and rankle, to inflame hearts, to fever human existence, and

tó poison human society at the fountain springs of life. Very emphatically was it said by one whose whole being had smarted under such affliction, "Adder's poison is under their lips."

THE FRITH OF FORTH FERRYMAN.

"As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead."
JAMES II, 26.

ON the Frith of Forth lived an old ferryman, a man of much thought and observation, but of few words; a constant student of the Bible, and a firm believer in its truths. Among his patrons were two loquacious companions, whose business led them across the river on the same day once a week. Their conversation always turned upon some doctrinal point. The ferryman was frequently annoyed by the repetition of *faith* on one side and *works* on the other, because they were used in a sense so different from their real import, and so destructive of their Scriptural harmony.

At length his patience failed him; he felt that he must interfere. He said nothing, but fell upon the following expedient: Upon one of his oars he painted "Faith," and upon the other, "Works." It was not long before the zealous but friendly disputants applied for a passage over the Forth. Upon entering the deepest part of the river, where the swollen water rushed down with some violence, the ferryman took in "Faith," and pulled away upon "Works," with all his might. The boat went round and round, much to the annoyance and terror of the two passengers.

"Put out the other oar," said one of them in a loud and angry tone.

"Very well," was the calm reply of the old man, at the same time taking in "Works," and putting out "Faith" alone, upon which he pulled.

The experiment with this oar produced the same result,

and drove the witnesses of it to the conclusion that the ferryman was "out of his head."

The old man, however, continued his "practical demonstrations" on the water, till he thought the friends were prepared to see two things in connection. He then called their attention to the names painted on his oars.

"I have tried your way," said he, "and yours; and you have seen the result. Now, observe my way." And giving a steady hand to each oar, the little boat soon acknowledged the power of their harmonious strokes, by the straight and rapid flight which she took for the landing.



CHRIST IN YOU.

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."
COLOSSIANS I, 27.

FEW Christians have attained to that intimate and complete union with Christ of which he spoke in the last interview with his disciples before his crucifixion—"Abide in me, and I in you." It is not merely trusting in Christ, or walking with Christ; it is living in him, and having his presence ever in the soul. As two friends, though separated, live in each other's thoughts and affections, and possess one spirit, seek each other's happiness, rejoice in each other, and often, without consultation, come, as it were, instinctively to the same opinion, and adopt the same course of life, so Christ and the true believer are one.

Paul in one of those sententious sayings, which contain an epitome of the Gospel, declares that the grand revelation of the New Testament is, "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" O, the preciousness of such a union with Christ! of such a *real presence* of the Savior in the soul! And yet it is to be feared that many of his followers know but little of it.

Some have merely a *historic* Christ. Others have a *dogmatic* Christ; the Christ of the catechism and the schools.

What we need in order to know the full power of Christ—the power of his life, the power of his doctrine, the power of his death, the power of his resurrection—is, to have Christ *in* us as the object of thought, of trust, of affection, of desire, of hope, of joy—to be in sympathy with his feelings and his work—to be swayed by his spirit.

A German woman, a Romanist, residing in New York, on leaving her native land, had received from her priest a charm, which was to preserve her amid the perils of the voyage, and to protect her in a land of strangers. Such a charm is generally procured by German Catholic emigrants before coming to America. Sometimes it consists of a small crucifix; sometimes of a mere picture of the Savior on the cross, enveloped in a leather case; sometimes of an image of the Virgin. In this case it was a crucifix of porcelain. Its possessor having reached New York in safety, and thus proved the virtue of her crucifix, kept it suspended upon the wall of her chamber, as an aid to devotion, if not itself an object of grateful adoration. But one day, as she was adjusting the furniture of the room, a sudden jar brought down the crucifix to the floor, and broke it into fragments. Alas! what could she do now! For a time she gave herself up to weeping and self-reproach. But in her grief, she sought counsel of a neighbor in an adjoining apartment. “What shall I do?” she cried, “for my dear Christ is broken to pieces?”

It happened that this neighbor was one of a congregation of German Seceders from the Roman Catholic Church—one who had embraced the doctrines of evangelical religion, and who had experienced the grace of Christ in her own soul. She said to her distressed friend, “Do not grieve, and I will tell you how you may make up your loss. I keep the Savior always ‘*in my heart!*’” She then explained to her the Scriptures, and invited her to go and hear the preacher of the new congregation on the next Sabbath. The invitation was accepted; the eyes of the poor disconsolate woman were opened, and she, too, found a Christ whom she can

keep always in her heart, and of whom no casualty nor violence can ever deprive her.

Our faith in the historic evidences of Christianity may be shaken, at times, by those doubts and fears to which all Christians are exposed; our creeds may be assailed or undermined; our ecclesiastical systems may be exploded into fragments; but nothing shall ever deprive us of Christ, if he be in "us the hope of glory."—*J. P. Thompson, D. D.*



BARRY, THE SOLDIER.

"He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."
HEBREWS VII, 25.

ONE day a conversation arose in a ward of the hospital at Scutari on the subject of religion. A convalescent had crawled with his crutch to the bedside of a comrade, anxious to know how it fared with one who had stood shoulder to shoulder with him in more than one affray.

"Well, Barry, how are you to-day?" inquired the visitor, in a cheerful tone.

"I can not say, 'All's well,' indeed, Stanton, either outwardly or inwardly; but you are the man I was so wishing to see."

"And what can I do for you, my good fellow?"

"Well, the chaplain was here yesterday, and I told him that I was miserable. I told him that I had tried pleasure, drink, every thing; and that now my wretched mind was harder to bear than my wounds. What do you think he said? In the most solemn and earnest manner he said, 'TRY CHRIST.' All night long those two words have been in my ears, 'Try Christ.' But what can they mean?"

"A glorious meaning they have, Barry. The Son of God is willing to save you, if you are willing to believe on him and be saved. Be in earnest; he will save you

from sin and hell. Trust in him; and he will not let you perish. Ask him to forgive your sins. Come to him, and you shall not be cast out."

"But, Stanton, are you certain all this is true? You know the life I led—too bad almost to be forgiven."

"As true as God himself," answered the pious soldier reverently; and taking a Bible, he read the words, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii, 16. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi, 31. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew xi, 28.

This good news was eagerly listened to by Barry, and the words came as cool water to his thirsty soul. He was induced to seek with earnestness and perseverance an interest in that salvation which Christ purchased by the shedding of his own precious blood, and which he so freely bestows on all those who believe on him. And he did not seek in vain; for by the teaching of the Holy Spirit he found, to the peace and joy of his soul, that Christ "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him."

Reader, will you follow the example of the poor, wounded soldier? Will you "try Christ?" Does your heart secretly reply, "Yes, when I have tried all the pleasures the world can supply, and when I am on the eve of bidding a last and long farewell to all its delights, then, and not till then, I will 'try Christ.'" Let no such infatuation hold possession of your spirit. You know not how or when you will be summoned hence. In a moment, while in the midst of the gayeties and frivolities of the world, the hand of death may be laid upon you; or if sickness should be permitted to terminate your existence on earth, delirium may seize your fevered brain, and you may pass out of time into eternity before you have sought and found pardon and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Then what a dreadful position will yours be! lost forever, because you refused to seek Christ, the only Savior; and now he whom you refused as a Savior will become your Judge.

But you are not yet lost forever, neither are you standing at the judgment-seat of Christ. Then, while life is yours, and your reasoning faculties are continued to you, "try Christ;" try him at once.—*London Religious Tract Society.*



THE ORPHAN BOY AND GEN. WASHINGTON.

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." PSALM XXXVII, 25.

VERY many years ago, in a desolate little cabin in the suburbs of Philadelphia, sat a lonely widow, surrounded by her fatherless children. Her husband had fallen in the battles of his country, but since then she had earned a scanty subsistence by her own hands without being burdensome to any; and her little ones, though but poorly fed and clothed, had never felt that bitterest ingredient of poverty—alms-seeking from the public. But recently sickness had laid its heavy hand upon her, and stern want—starvation almost—had followed closely in its footsteps. Yet did not her faith fail. She repeated the words that so often before had cheered her sad heart, "Leave thy fatherless children, and I will preserve them alive, saith the Lord;" "I have been young, and now am old, yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread;" and her heart rose in humble yet firm reliance upon their divine Author.

As her children had eaten nothing all day, and she was still too feeble even to rise from her bed, she now felt compelled, though most reluctantly, to send forth the eldest of her children on his *first* mission of begging, to seek from some charitable stranger a few shillings to buy bread, hoping she should soon be again able to earn it by her

own efforts. The child, a noble little fellow of ten years, shrank from such an errand ; but seeing his poor mother's look of anguish, he hushed his own regrets, and rushed forth into the streets, little heeding, in his grief, what course he took ; but a higher power, though unseen, directed his steps.

As the child walked mournfully on, looking wistfully into the faces of the people he met, he was too much disheartened by their cold or indifferent looks to venture to address them. The longer he put it off, the more reluctant he was to ask the alms he feared might be refused, and weeping bitterly he hurried on, unknown and unheeded by the busy throng.

Suddenly a kind voice spoke to him, and looking up he saw a mild, benevolent-looking gentleman, dressed in black, and wearing a three-cornered hat. Taking the child's hand in his, and leading him gently onward, the stranger gentleman soon drew from the little boy their whole history—the father's name and death, the mother's struggles to gain a support, her recent sickness, and their subsequent sufferings ; and then he bade the child lead him to his home, though stopping at a provision-store on the way to order a supply for the poor family. Entering the house, the quick eye of the stranger soon discerned the cause of the mother's feebleness, and introducing himself as a physician quite suited to her case, though not a regular practitioner, he offered to *write a prescription*, which he said he was sure would prove beneficial. Leaving the paper on the table, after saying a few kind, cheering words to the mother, he left the house promising to repeat his visit in a few days, and then to renew the prescription if necessary.

When he was gone, the widow looked at the paper, and found it an order for a hundred dollars, to be paid on demand, and signed by GEORGE WASHINGTON.

This is a true incident. Such was the father of his country, a man fearing God, not less pitiful to the sorrows

of a weeping child and the anxieties of a widowed mother, than great in the armies of his country and the councils of the nation. Thus were the widow's prayers answered, and the seed of this faithful Christian not suffered to "*beg bread.*"

SCOLDING IN THE PULPIT.

"He that winneth souls is wise." PROVERBS XI, 30.

THERE is a difference between *winning* and *driving*, and one of the commonest mistakes of the pulpit is the confounding of the two, and of indulging in a fault-finding, censorious spirit, instead of the opposite. Ministers may find many things going wrong in their Churches, their members becoming lukewarm and worldly-minded, indulging in practices inconsistent with their profession, and that hinder the cause of Christ, and they rail out against them from Sabbath to Sabbath, and wonder that their tirades do not check these evils; that they continue just as bad, or become even worse than they were before. They feel that ministerial faithfulness requires that they should bear testimony against the sins of their flocks, and endeavor to induce them to forsake them; and so it does, but they mistake the best method of doing it. Churches, in this matter, are very much like families. They may be governed and molded by kindness and affection, but not by scolding and fault-finding. When affection is at the helm of a family, and beams out in every look and action of its head, when sorrow, rather than anger, is depicted in the countenance, when any of its members do wrong, the family can be very easily corrected, in all ordinary cases. But when petulance and railing follow each other in quick succession, and the members come to feel that they will be scolded and harshly found fault with for every little error they may fall into, all family government soon comes to an end. The head of the family loses all power to mold it. Just so it is with Churches. They may be per-

suaded, encouraged, and reasoned into almost any thing that is proper, but they can be scolded and driven into nothing. Said the sweet-tempered Christian poet, Cowper, in a letter to the Rev. John Newton :

“No man was ever scolded out of his sins. The heart, corrupt as it is, and because it is so, grows angry if it be not treated with some management and good manners, and scolds again. A surly mastiff will bear perhaps to be poked, though he will growl even under the operation, but if you will touch him roughly he will bite. There is no grace that the spirit of self can counterfeit with more success than a religious zeal. A man thinks that he is skillfully searching the hearts of others, when he is only gratifying the malignity of his own, and charitably supposes his hearers destitute of all grace, that he may shine the more in his own eyes by comparison. When he has performed this notable task, he wonders that they are not converted. ‘He has given it to them soundly, and if they do not tremble and confess that God is in them in truth, he gives them up as reprobate, incorrigible, and lost forever.’ But a man that loves me, if he sees me in error, will pity me, and endeavor calmly to convince me of it, and persuade me to forsake it. If he has great and good news to tell me, he will not do it angrily, and in much heat and discomposure of spirit. It is not, therefore, easy to conceive on what ground a minister can justify a conduct which only proves that he does not understand his errand. The absurdity of it would certainly strike him, if he were not himself deluded.”

Sharp rebuke is sometimes necessary and useful, but all other means should be tried before it is resorted to. And when we who preach the Gospel, fail in our attempts to reform our hearers, we ought not, at once, to settle down in a state of self-satisfaction with our own efforts, and lay all the blame on the depravity of others, and not our own. It is possible that we may not have approached them in a right spirit, and plied them with the proper

motives, and if so, we may be as much to blame as they are.

Two clergymen were settled in their youth, in contiguous parishes. The congregation of the one had become very much broken and scattered, while that of the other remained large and strong. At a ministerial gathering, Dr. A. said to Dr. B., "Brother, how has it happened that while I have labored as diligently as you have, and preached better sermons, and more of them, my parish has been scattered to the winds, and yours remains strong and unbroken?" Dr. B. facetiously replied, "O, I'll tell you, brother. When you go fishing, you first get a great rough pole for a handle, to which you attach a large cod line, and a great hook, and twice as much bait as the fish can swallow. With these accouterments, you dash up to the brook, and throw in your hook, with, *There bite, you dogs.* Thus, *you* scare away all the fish. When *I* go fishing, I get a little switching pole, a small line, and just such a hook and bait as the fish can swallow. Then I creep up to the brook, and gently slip them in, and *I twitch 'em out, twitch 'em out till my basket is full.*"



CARRYING ELEPHANTS.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he can not be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, can not be my disciple." LUKE XIV, 26, 27.

SOME years ago, a missionary to the heathen had several inquirers who seemed anxious to know the way of salvation. He labored to make them understand the work which Jesus came to do, and assured them, that if they would only cast away their idols, and come to him, they should be saved. But he told them the way to heaven was a narrow way, and to get through, they must lay aside every thing which would hinder or prevent them—that they must give up *all* for Jesus. The truth was

received at length by all, save one—a very rich man. He owned a great many elephants, and employed men to team goods with them, from one city to another, which business brought him much money. This man could not find Jesus, although the others were rejoicing in the hope of heaven. One day, after he had argued, and explained, and encouraged all he could, the missionary asked one of the converts what he thought the trouble was with his poor friend, that he could not find peace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

“O, teacher,” replied the simple-hearted believer, “I know very well why he don’t walk the way to heaven. The gate is so narrow he can’t get in.”

“But it is no more so for him than for the rest of you,” said the missionary.

“O, but you see his case is quite different, teacher. We were poor, we had nothing to carry with us; but he is very rich, and wants to carry all his elephants into the kingdom with him. He has been a long time standing beside the strait gate, trying to crowd through, but there is n’t room; he’ll never get in while he tries to take the elephants with him.”

The Bible tells us, “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Perhaps you may think, that, as you have no riches, there will be no difficulty in your entering in at the strait gate. But remember, what the merchant’s treasures are to him, what the heathen’s elephants were to him, your business, your pleasures, or your sins may be to you. Any thing which you love *more* than Christ, any thing you can not give up to please him, will keep you where the poor owner of the elephants stood so long, crowding at the strait gate without entering; and these may, unless left behind, shut you out forever from that blessed land, where Jesus reigns, and where he is all in all to those who enter its narrow way and who live as he commands.

THE KNIGHT OF THE CASTLE.

"Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven." LUKE VI, 37.

IN the Middle Ages, when the lords and knights were always at war with each other, one of them resolved to revenge himself on a neighbor who had offended him. It chanced that on the very evening when he had made this resolution, he heard that his enemy was to pass near his castle, with only a very few men with him. It was a good opportunity to take his revenge, and he determined not to let it pass. He spoke of his plan in the presence of his chaplain, who tried in vain to persuade him to give it up. The good man said a great deal to the duke about the sin of what he was going to do, but in vain. At length, seeing that all his words had no effect, he said, "My lord, since I can not persuade you to give up this plan of yours, will you at least consent to come with me to the chapel, that we may pray together before you go?" The duke consented, and the chaplain and he kneeled together in prayer. Then the mercy-loving Christian said to the revengeful warrior, "Will you repeat after me, sentence by sentence, the prayer which our Lord Jesus Christ himself taught to his disciples?"

"I will do it," replied the duke.

He did it accordingly. The chaplain said a sentence, and the duke repeated it, till he came to the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." There the duke was silent.

"My lord duke, you are silent," said the chaplain. "Will you be so good as to continue to repeat the words after me, *if you dare to do so?* 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.'"

"I can not," replied the duke.

"Well, God can not forgive you, for he has said so. He himself has given us this prayer. Therefore you must either give up your revenge or give up saying this prayer;

for to ask God to pardon you *as you pardon others*, is to ask him to take vengeance on you for all your sins. Go now, my lord, and meet your victim. God will meet you at the great day of judgment."

The iron will of the duke was broken.

"No," said he, "I will finish my prayer: 'My God, my Father, pardon me; forgive me as I desire to forgive him who has offended me; lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil!'"

"Amen," said the chaplain.

"Amen," repeated the duke, who now understood the Lord's Prayer better than he had ever done before, since he had learned to apply it to himself.



THE LITTLE FOXES.

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the grapes." SOLOMON'S SONG II, 15.

LET us be on our guard against *little sins*; against what men call little sins, for there is nothing really little in the way of sins. Watch against every thing that wounds the conscience, however slightly. Conscience is a sacred thing. Guard well your spiritual life. Watch against the little sin that insensibly may wound, and thus in the end destroy. You can easily kill a man by stabbing him with one blow to the heart. But may you not easily kill a man also by opening a little vein in his wrist? The blood may only flow drop by drop, but if you don't stop that wound, you will bleed to death, and just as surely as if one plunged a dagger into your heart, and sent you into eternity in a moment. Beware, then, of the little things that keep the wounds of the soul open; guard against little sins, which, if not guarded against, will as surely destroy the soul as one great sin.

John Newton says Satan seldom comes to Christians with great temptations, or with temptations to commit a

great sin. You bring a green log and a candle together, and they are very safe neighbors. But bring a few small sticks and let them take fire, and the log be in the midst of them, and you will soon get rid of your log. And so it is with little sins. You will be startled with the idea of committing a great sin, and so the devil brings a little temptation, and leaves you to indulge yourself. "There is no great harm in this," "no great peril in that," and so by these little chips we are first easily lighted up, and at last the great green log is burned. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.—*Rev. Newman Hall.*

THE WARNING BELL.

"They pulled away the shoulder and stopped their ears, that they should not hear."

A DISTINGUISHED writer tells of a certain bell, so suspended by the hand of benevolence on a rock in the ocean as to be rung by the action of the waves beating against it, and thus *warn* the approaching mariner of the perilous locality. Certain pirates, not liking this warning sound, which so effectually interfered with the attainment of objects of their own, mutilated the bell that gave it, and subsequently themselves dashed upon the very rock of destruction which, in their selfish madness, they had robbed of its means of admonishing them.

Thus is it often with states, communities, societies, Churches, and individuals. They hear the warning bell in the dangerous sea which they navigate, and straightway, lest it should interfere with their private plans, they silence it. They see the finger of God's truth pointing at them, and forthwith they cut it off. Thus Ahab of old, when asked by Jehoshaphat if there were not a prophet of the Lord of whom he might inquire respecting the path of duty, replied: "There is yet one man, Micaiah, the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord; *but I hate*

him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." And when the faithful prophet appeared before him, and was urged to speak only *good* concerning him, the King was vexed and angry because he heard the same old note of warning. In his impetuous haste to rid himself of an annoyance, he gave orders to "put this fellow in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace." Ah! thou poor, infatuated King of Israel, wilt thou indeed return in peace? Listen to the last note of the warning bell before it is silenced: "And Micaiah said, *If thou return in peace the Lord hath not spoken by me.* And he said, *Hearken, O people, every one of you.*"

The King never came back. He dashed against the very rock of which he had been faithfully warned in tones so unwelcome to his proud spirit. "And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote the King of Israel between the joints of the harness; wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded. And the King was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even; and the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up his blood; and they washed his armor, according to the word of the Lord which he spake."

Ahab was the type of many a man in our own days, whose career furnishes a sad spectacle. Not unfrequently does the pastor gaze upon an infatuated sinner, who madly dashes upon some rock in his pathway in life, which, in his eager haste, he has deprived of its unwelcome note of warning, only to convert it into the rock of his own destruction. "Whosoever shall fall on this stone *shall be broken.*"

Let, then, faithful warning voices still warn. Let an enlightened conscience, unperverted, still speak. Let truth and the ambassadors of truth still point out and point at

sin in any and every form. Let the monitory bells, in the perilous ocean of human probation, ring out all their faithful notes of admonition, as the mariner, bound for eternity, tosses tumultuously past.

LITTLE CHARLIE AND HIS BASKET OF EGGS.

"Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child." EXODUS XXII, 22.

Mrs. W. was left a widow with two children—a boy named Charlie, eight years old, and a girl named Mary, aged six. After her bereavement there followed the distress of securing food and raiment for herself and little ones. Her husband had left her a small cottage, and her rent was, therefore, free, unless we except the little annual tax on it. Charlie understood the new condition of his life, and his knowledge told heavily on his young heart. Thoughtful and considerate beyond his years, he tried to forget his own sorrow, and used every possible appliance to mitigate his mother's. He ran errands for any who would employ him; made kites for neighboring boys, getting two or three cents each in return for his articles; gathered up all the old horseshoes that had dropped in the road, and bargained with the blacksmith for them. "I will help you, dear ma," he used to say in tones of inexpressible tenderness, throwing his arms around her neck; "I will help you all I can; and when I get bigger we will sell our house, and go west and buy us a farm, and raise our own wheat, and potatoes, and corn, and hay." Poor fellow! little did he know how such words of blessed endearment made his mother feel all the keener and deeper her great and helpless desolation.

The writer saw Charlie one Summer's evening on his way home from a neighboring town; his feet weary and his eyes swollen with recent tears.

"My little man," said I, "where have you been to-day?"

"To C., sir, with some eggs."

“And how did you succeed?”

His breast heaved and his throat choked for a moment—and then came the reply: “Not very well, sir—not very well; the grocery-man said he ’spected I stole the eggs, and said he guessed he would n’t buy stolen eggs. He did n’t buy, sir, and here the eggs all are, except two that broke.”

I knew Charlie; I knew his mother; I knew the boy’s sensitive spirit; I knew the struggle of his mother for life; and when I heard his story of the grocer, the baseless suspicion of the man, and his worse than cruel talk, my heart was stirred within me. I took the eggs, and I took Charlie in my arms; gave him his price for his eggs, and then a pressure and a kiss, vowing with myself, at the same time, that when I should meet that grocer I would have my revenge.

It is an old story—as old as the world almost—that the orphan travels a thorny path. Heartless men and heartless women strike their daggers into breasts that need rays from the kingdom of heaven to help them live in the great strife they are fighting; but how few—O, how few!—the number who wipe away the tears of the widow and of her children, and who feed her fire with coal and wood, and ask how much the meal in the barrel and the oil in the cruse!

In the cabin of yonder field, in the cellar or garret of the house of that crowded street, you know a mother and her orphan boy or girl reside. And you know more. Yesterday morning, last week, early last Winter, some time, no matter when, for it is not long ago, you refused—yes, *you*—to help these helpless ones; you had a sneer or a cold word for them; or, worse than all, you had in your heart Cold Neglect for them. Slipped feet and cozy rooms are yours in the wild, dark night of storms and snows, and some day a reckoning will come for yourself, and others like you, who have oppressed the widow and orphan by a refusal to help when help was so urgently needed. Some day an avenging spirit will track your path, and make

your agony keen and insufferable, because of your refusal "to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction." Bitter, and fruitless, and hopeless will be your repentance in that hour when a voice shall strike to your inmost spirit, saying, in reply to all your extenuations and protestations, "Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. Depart from me."

MOUNT PILATE.

"The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." PSALM CXIX, 130.

IN the heart of Switzerland there is a mountain called Mount Pilate. It is one of the most wild and gloomy eminences to be found upon the globe, black with sepulchral fires, and inaccessible storm-scathed rocks and fathomless gulfs. The carrion vulture, the most ill-omened of birds, soars and screams as it breasts the storms which ever sweep these solitudes.

There is a tradition among the peasantry who dwell at the base of this mountain, that Pontius Pilate, having surrendered our Savior to his murderers, and washed his hands in unavailing averment that he would have no share in the iniquity he so wickedly permitted, here, a Heaven-scathed vagabond, closed his infamous life. The legend says that, after years of remorse and despair, the guilty Roman governor plunged, a self-murderer, into the stormy, icy lake which occupies the summit of the Mount.

But the vexed spirit, even in death, could find no rest. It continues to haunt the place. A spectral form is seen, it is said, often to emerge from the lake, which goes through the act of washing and wringing its hands, in memory of that hour of weakness and guilt when he "washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." The hideous apparition seems to convulse even nature itself. Dense clouds

of mist rise over the "Infernal Lake," so called, and wrap the whole summit of the mountain in midnight gloom. From the bosom of the cloud the shrieks of the wretch, scourged by the lashes of fiends, pierce the air, and a storm bursts forth which rends the forest and shatters the rocks with unearthly power.

The simple peasants in the vale below, the untutored children of superstition, gaze upon these phenomena with a spirit of awe which the cultured mind can with difficulty apprehend. They make the sign of the cross, fall upon their knees in prayer, and shudder in contemplating these evidences of Divine retribution. The influence which the truth blending with this superstition must exert upon the mind of an imaginative, unlettered peasant boy must be vast. One would expect to find, in the midst of these Alpine valleys, a prayerful and sin-fearing race.

The popular mind must be kept in ignorance in order that superstition may be invested with power. This is the key to the policy of Rome, so far as Rome has any honest policy. An educated people will see no spectral apparition in the wreathing forms of mist—will hear no shriek of fiends in the wailings of the storm. They will not believe that the tears of Christ are in this vial; that this rusty iron spike was one which pierced our Savior; that this house of Loretto was the home of Mary, borne by angels through the air from Palestine to Italy. Therefore, the masses must be kept in ignorance, that they may be controlled by the energies of superstition.

An educated people can not have their souls thus nurtured. But how abundant is the nourishment afforded to the soul by the simple yet sublime revelations of God's Word! What can the imagination fancy surpassing the themes of death, resurrection, judgment, heaven, hell, eternity? The more highly the mind is cultivated, the more thoroughly does it appreciate, and feel the power of these revelations. Pure religion and intellectual culture are the handmaids of each other.

THE CITY RESERVOIR.

"With thee is the fountain of life." PSALM XXVI, 9.

YONDER, on the hights, is the city reservoir. Not a drop of water can it supply itself with, although from it the whole city is supplied. That mighty engine slave—for it is the slavery of machinery that is to do away with the slavery of muscle—that steam-pump, labors with solemn grandeur and unwearied patience, lifting oceans full and oceans full of water, and throwing it incessantly up into that reservoir. And although there is a main along every street, although there is a distributing pipe for every house, and although every man in this great city draws for refreshment, and cleanliness, and luxury, there is always enough; because silent, and far away, and unthought of, and unremunerated, that lifting arm goes on throwing up, and throwing up, and throwing up.

Now command stillness there, and let the fires go out, and let the pump forget its work, and let the draught continue, let all the streets suck out the stores from the reservoir, and by and by there will be a sense of want in all our houses. The want is occasioned by going out of the fire and the cessation of the working of the pump.

And as it is with the reservoir, so it is with us. Where you must watch, where you must see that you maintain power, is at the sources. There where the fountain is—there where is the reservoir from which we are to draw courage, and inspiration, and perseverance—there we are to watch and maintain a supply. And to this end we must keep up our connection of faith with God, and feel the influence of the eternal world.

In the salvation of Christ, in the blessed power of faith in the Gospel, in that love which from the bosom of God has come to our hearts, and in the spirit and work of it, we can make ourselves strong, and all other things shall be given unto us.

A CONTRITE HEART—THE BAKED FLOWER-POT.

"To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." ISAIAH LXVI, 2.

A CONTRITE heart—contrite is from the Latin *contritus*, [from *con*—completely—and *tero*—to break up—that is, to break up fine, to reduce thoroughly,] which means, as applied to soil, to which it naturally refers, completely mellowed; that is, with all hardness and unfertility removed—is a heart in which every element alien to truth, or in any manner uncongenial with the power of truth, is reduced so that the soil tenderly takes, genially germinates, and faithfully fructifies every seed dropped by the Word or the Spirit.

We have in the library where we are writing this, a few plants very dear to us from their association with the dead. Their fragrance is to us as a souvenir dropped out of heaven. One of them drooped a little while ago. Although we piled water upon the cup at its foot, the earth on top was dry. It did not connect somehow with the capillaries below. We poured water upon the top, but it ran off from the baked surface, as the Summer shower splashes off from the dry bricks. We took it in hand, and, with a sharp knife-blade, plowed up the surface to the depth of an inch. It was like cutting the dried clay of the streets. But after we had plowed and cross-plowed it, and harrowed it, and picked off all the pebbles that worked to the top, and made all smooth and soft, we poured water upon it again, and lo! the little mouths of the earth-atoms drank it up so greedily that it was gone out of sight in an instant. Then the connection was re-established with the lower stratum, and the drops from above went down, and the drops from beneath went up, and mingling moistened, and sweetened, and blessed every rootlet and errant fiber, till the drooping leaves looked up again, and the wilting flowers freshened, and the whole plant looked as if it had entered into peace.

What an emblem, thought we, of many and many a Christian heart! A heart that has got so dry under the

hot sun of worldliness that it can not draw up the waters of the sanctuary for its nutriment, and when even the baptism of the Spirit descends upon it, the gracious drops glance off from the arid surface.

What it needs is to become a *contrite* heart. It needs to be plowed by faithful and deep meditation, and cross-plowed by honest self-accusation, and harrowed by conviction, and broken up fine by penitence, and cleansed by confession, and then—softened and made meet for the Great Husbandman's use—it is ready once more to profit by the baptism of the Spirit, and to be nurtured by the waters of the sanctuary, and to throw out from its revived and fresh-blooming graces an aroma of piety that shall make glad the Master's heart, and that shall constrain all whose senses take it in with delight to say, How good and how pleasant it is to learn of Jesus, and be filled with his spirit!

Such a Christian, so returned to his first love, has not merely a new joy which passeth knowledge, and a new flavor of usefulness exhaling from every look and word, but he has brought himself into precisely that state of mind which is most favorable for influencing the impenitent to come to the Cross.

He feels for them now more tenderly than he did or could before; for his heart is now sweetly sensitive to all the ten thousand times ten thousand motives of the Gospel; so that he is more impelled to pity and alarm, and then help them than ever he was before. He appreciates the difficulties which need to be removed out of their path as he never did before. He has felt the same. And specially is he now prepared for personal labor with them as never before, because he will go so gently, with such pathos in his tones, such luster in his eye, such *friendliness* in all his aspect—with such *tenderness of spirit*, as will make way for him straight to the secret place of their hearts. Much has been said of the *secret* of pulpit power. One of its great, if not its greatest element is the ability to sympathize with those who need sympathy.

IN THE DISTANCE.

"Faith is the substance of things not seen." HEBREWS XI, 1.

FLOWERS and shrubbery are placed under our feet and all around us, because they will bear to be looked at near at hand. But the mountain ledges are more inaccessible, and are made to be looked at from a distant point of observation. As seen afar off, they are imposing, beautiful, sublime. Ruskin says:

"Are not all natural things, it may be asked, as lovely near as far away? Nay, not so. Look at the clouds, and watch the delicate sculpture of their elaborate sides, and the rounded luster of their magnificent rolling. They were meant to be beheld far away; they were shaped for their place, high above our head; approach them and they fuse into vague mists, or whirl away in fierce fragments of thunderous vapor. Look at the crest of the Alp, from the far-away plains over which its light is cast, whence human souls have communion with it by their myriads. The child looks up to it in the dawn, and the husbandman in the burden and heat of the day, and the old man in the going down of the sun, and it is to them all as the celestial city on the world's horizon; dyed with the depth of heaven, and clothed with the calm of eternity. There was it set for holy dominion by Him who marked for the sun his journey, and bade the moon know her going down. It was built for its place in the far-off sky; approach it, and as the sound of the voice of man dies away about its foundation, and the tide of human life shallowed on the vast aerial shore, is at last met by the Eternal, 'Here shall the proud waves be stayed,' the glory of its aspect fades into blanched fearfulness; its purple walls are rent into grisly rocks, its silver fret-work saddened into wasting snow; the storm bands of the ages are on its breast, the ashes of its own ruin lie solemnly on its white raiment.

"Nor in such circumstances as these alone, though,

strangely enough, the discrepancy between apparent and actual beauty is greater in proportion to the unapproachableness of the object, is the law observed. For every distance from the eye there is a peculiar kind of beauty, or a different system of lines of form—the sight of that beauty is reserved for that distance, and for that alone. If you approach nearer, that kind of beauty is lost, and another succeeds, to be disorganized and reduced to strange and incomprehensible means and appliances in its turn. If you desire to perceive the great harmonies of the form of a rocky mountain, you must not ascend upon its sides. All is there disorder and accident, or seems so; sudden starts of its shattered beds hither and thither; ugly struggles of unexpected strength from under the ground; fallen fragments, toppling one over another into more helpless falls. Retire from it, and as your eye commands it more and more, as you see the ruined mountain world with a wider glance, behold! dim sympathies begin to busy themselves in the disjointed mass; line binds itself into stealthy fellowship with line; group by group, the helpless fragments gather themselves into ordered companies; new captains of hosts and masses of battalions become visible one by one, and far away answers of foot to foot, and of bone to bone, till the powerless chaos is seen risen up with girded loins, and not one piece of all the unregarded heap could now be spared from the mystic whole.”

The visions of faith, like things of sense in the distance, are far away. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for” in the distant future; it is “the evidence of things not seen,” or which can not be subjected to a close inspection. All around us seems dark, mysterious, inexplicable, a mere jumble of incoherent and fortuitous events. We can see no order in them, trace out no plan, detect no presiding intelligence, and every thing is as chaotic as the broken and jagged surface of the mountain when seen near at hand. The apostles, amid the events of the crucifixion, could perceive nothing but confusion, defeat, and darkness. But

when faith came to their aid, how changed the scene! Then, these disjointed events of fear and dismay appeared in sympathy with all the previous ages, a fulfillment of God's eternal purposes of love and mercy, connected in lines of fellowship with the highest hopes of our race, and forming groups and battalions of encircling glory around the throne of God.

So, to the eye of sense, every thing of our personal history and of passing events seems formless, void, chaotic, and without design. There is no beauty in them to make them desirable. But when faith sees behind the scene a guiding intelligence, ordering, controlling, and directing them to purposes of infinite love, then they begin to assume forms of beauty, and to suggest occasions for confidence and hope. There is no satisfaction in viewing this scene of things, unless light is let in upon it from eternity, unless the far-off visions of faith are admitted to give order to disorder, light to darkness, continuity to what is broken, and splendor to the mean and the groveling. Sense is the microscope which pries into the deformities of things, but faith the telescope which views them in their connection with the universal laws of order established by "Him who is first, and midst, and without end."

COALS OF FIRE.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." ROMANS XII, 19-21.

EVERY one feels that heaping coals of fire on the head of an enemy is a singular mode of expressing love. In a passage expressly designed to forbid retaliation, and to inculcate the rendering of good for evil, it seems strange to be urged to it by the reason that goodness would be like coals of fire on the head! This is making kindness only

a more exquisite instrument of torture. It is the most subtle cruelty to torment one by his finer feelings!

Commentators have given various explanations, but all with the mistake of supposing the figure of coals of fire to be derived from some domestic use of fire, or some judicial barbaric use of it. Applied to wood, or clothes, or perishable objects, fire consumes, wastes, destroys. But, *applied to metals*, fire subdues, and brings from a hard and unmanageable condition to one of malleableness and use. It *consumes* fabrics or sacrifices, it only *subdues* iron and copper. It must have been a strange feeling that stole into the heart of an imaginative man who, in the early ages, first saw the rude earth or ores heaped upon fuel, and coals upon the ore, and then, in the growing intensity of heat, at length beheld the flashing drops trickling down, and flowing out like water! The struggle is over! The hammer could not beat it out—pinchers could not pull it—the frost could not reach it, nor pressure overcome it. But the silent searching of fire overcomes the tough metal; it yields, and flows sparkling down—subdued by coals!

There would evidently be one class of persons, then, familiar with this process of smelting, or with the like later fusion of metals in crucibles, to whom “heaping of coals upon a thing” would at once suggest simply melting it, subduing it!

And is not this the natural solution of the passage above?

Meet your enemy with love; do good for his evil. Kindness heaped upon his head will melt and subdue him.

LOSING HIS WIFE.

“Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” ISAIAH XLVIII, 10.

DR. JOHN BROWN, the distinguished surgeon of Edinburgh, narrates some very touching particulars in regard to the death of his mother, and the effect it produced on his father.

On the morning of May 28, 1816, says he, when I was in my sixth year, my eldest sister, Janet, and I, were sleeping in the kitchen bed, with Tibbie Meek, our only servant. We were all three awakened by a cry of pain—sharp, insufferable, as of one stung. Years after we two confided to each other, sitting by the barn-side, that we thought that great cry which arose at midnight in Egypt must have been like it. We all knew whose voice it was, and in our night-clothes we ran into the passage, and into the little parlor to the left hand, in which was a closet-bed. We found my father standing before us erect, his hands clinched in his black hair, his eyes full of misery and amazement, his face white as that of the dead. He frightened us. He was this, or else his intense will had mastered his agony, for, taking his hands from his head, he said slowly and gently, "Let us give thanks," and turned to a little sofa in the room; there lay our mother, dead. She had long been ailing. I remember her sitting in a shawl—an Indian one, with little dark green spots on a light ground—and watching her grow pale with what I knew must have been strong pain. She had, being feverish, slipped out of bed, and grandmother, seeing her change come, had called my father, and they two saw her open her blue, kind eyes, and with one faint look of recognition to him, close them till the time of the restitution of all things.

"She had another morn than ours."

Then were seen in full action his keen, passionate nature, his sense of mental pain, and his supreme will, instant and unsparing, making himself and his terrified household give thanks in the midst of such a desolation—and for it. Her warfare was accomplished, her iniquities were pardoned; she had already received from her Lord's hand double for all her sins. This was his supreme, overmastering thought, and he gave it utterance.

Father's love for my mother had been tender, constant, and intense; and when the blow fell the wheels of

life in him were for a moment stopped, and then reversed in action. It is wonderful the change it made. He went from the burial and preached subsequently her funeral sermon; every one in the church in tears, himself outwardly unmoved. But from that time dated an entire, though always deepening, *alteration in his manner of preaching*, because an entire change in his way of dealing with God's Word. Not that his abiding religious views and convictions were then originated or even altered—he not only from a child knew the Holy Scriptures, but was wise unto salvation—but it strengthened and clarified, quickened and gave permanent direction to his sense of God as revealed in his Word. He took, as it were, to subsoil plowing; he got a new and adamant^e point to the instrument with which he bored; and with a fresh power, with his whole might, he sunk it right into the living rock, to the virgin gold. His entire nature had got a shock, and his blood was drawn inward, his surface was chilled; but fuel was heaped all the more on the inner fires, and his zeal burned with a new ardor. Indeed, had he not found an outlet for his pent-up energy, his brain must have given way, and his faculties either consumed themselves in wild, wasteful splendor and combustion, or dwindled into lethargy.

This incident is related of his altered matter and manner of preaching: He had been preaching, when very young, at a place called Galashiels, and one woman said to her neighbor, "What do you think of the young man's talk?" "O," was the reply, "it's pretty much—all pretty flowers—no more;" neither relishing nor appreciating his fine sentiments and figures. After his wife's death Mr. Brown preached in the same place, and the same woman, running to her friend, said, "*It's all so good—all so good now!*"

What we lost the congregation and the world gained. He gave himself wholly to the work of saving souls. From being elegant, rhetorical, and ambitious, he became concentrated, urgent, moving—being himself moved—keen, searching, unswerving, authoritative, full of the terrors of

the Lord, if he could but persuade men. The truth of the words of God had shone out upon him with an immediateness and infinity of meaning and power, which made them, though the same words he had looked on from childhood, other and greater and deeper words. He then left the ordinary commentators and men who write about meanings and flutter around the circumference and corners; he was bent on the center—on touching with his own fingers, on seeing with his own eyes the pearl of great price.

I had to sleep with him after my mother's death, little fellow as I was. His bed was in his study—a small room, with a very small grate. There was my mother's sofa, which was now forever sacred to him. I used to peep from under the coverlid after he had tucked me in, and watch him work and pray. "Poor, poor pa!" I used sometimes to murmur, and, hearing me, he would stop suddenly and come to my side, and comfort me in the foolish words of endearment my mother was accustomed to do, and tell me we would go by and by and live with mamma.

A verse which, when I became older, I often heard him repeat with deep and almost consuming feeling was this:

"But at my back I always hear
Time's wingéd chariots hurrying near;
And yonder all before me lie
Deserts of vast eternity."

The fervor of his ministrations was known far and near. A man of great capacity and culture, an avowed unbeliever in Christianity, came every Sabbath afternoon, for years, to hear him preach. He was often asked why he went to Church, when he did n't believe one word of what he heard. "True, I do n't believe him," was the reply; "but I like to hear and see a man in dead earnest once a week about any thing." Another hearer, also an unbeliever, said of him, "That's the man for me; he means what he says; he speaks as if Jesus Christ was at his elbow."

I question whether man ever lived whose whole being

was so thoroughly possessed of God as his. His meat and drink was to do his Father's will; his whole life given to calling men into the great fold of the good Shepherd; and the loss of his wife, my mother, was the epoch marking the great change in his spiritual life.

THE RUSTY SAW.

"I pray thee have me excused." LUKE XIV, 18.

"I HOPE you will excuse me this morning," said a rusty saw, as the carpenter took it down from a peg where it had hung inactive for a month; "I feel very unfit for labor. Indeed, I am quite rusty. That board, too, looks hard, and it will require an effort to go through it, such as I am altogether unprepared to make. Besides, there are several of my companions both bright and willing: I commend you to them;" and the saw yawned till every tooth was visible, as if this short speech had quite exhausted its small stock of energy.

"True as steel is a good motto," replied the carpenter, "and I trust you have not been so oxydized by the general corruption of the times as to forget your share in it. You ask to be excused, because you do not feel inclined to labor. I may not be able to appreciate the feelings of a rusty saw, but I must say that feeling is not to be consulted in cases of duty. You plead your rustiness. If this is to be admitted, I might as well hang you up, and expect no further service, for your rustiness will not leave you as long as you do nothing. Oil and exercise will alone remove it. As to the difficulty of the work, I am not aware that an instrument has any right to choose what work it will do, or will not do. And your last plea, that I have other saws in better condition, only proves the folly of the first three; for if I had pursued with others the course which you desire me to adopt in your case, they would be in no better condition than yourself." Hereupon the workman, having

overruled all excuses, applied a few drops of oil, and introduced the reluctant saw to a board of seasoned oak, and repeated the operation, till, after a few days, it became as bright and agile a saw as any one could wish.

We sometimes find a rusty saw at the prayer meeting. Ask him to lead in prayer, and he shakes his head. Perhaps he utters a half dozen words of prayer, not to the Master, but to the servant, "I pray thee have me excused," and, short as it is, it is as long as several acceptable prayers recorded in the Bible; and if it were in the language of the publican, or the penitent thief, or Peter sinking amidst the waves of Gennesaret, or the Syro-Phœnician woman, and directed to Heaven in the right spirit, it would find acceptance. But what reasons has the man for not praying? The reasons of the rusty saw. He does not feel like it. He has not prayed for a long time, and is quite rusty. There are others bright with communion with God who can do better. The workman feels tempted to hang him up, and thus spare himself the mortification, on the one hand, of being refused when he asks him to pray, and, on the other, the pain of listening to his first weak and awkward attempts to plead at the mercy-seat. But this will not be best for the subject himself. A few drops of oil, such as the beloved disciple recommends—1 John ii, 20-27—and exercise, may make his face to shine.

I sat down by the fireside of a kind-hearted man, the other day, who seemed to be in this rusty-saw condition. He is a professed Christian, and his wife also. His children have been presented to God in baptism, and yet he has never established the worship of God in his house. He knows it to be his duty. He is troubled, perhaps, at times, but he is reluctant to begin. He never feels just like it! Poor man! he is to be pitied, and his children. What refuge has such a family in the day of affliction? Alas! how many families of this kind, and how would the power of religion be multiplied if every one such would maintain the daily worship of God!

BOISTEROUS PARENTS.

"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." 1 TIMOTHY III, 4.

MUCH depends upon the tone of command, or the kinds of emphasis employed. It is a great mistake to suppose that what will make a child stare, or tremble, impresses more authority. The violent emphasis, the hard, stormy voice, the menacing air, only weakens authority; it commands a good thing as if it were only a bad, and fit to be in no way impressed, save by some stress of assumption. Let the command be always given quietly, as if it had some right in itself, and could utter itself to the conscience by some emphasis of its own. Is it not well understood that a bawling and violent teamster has no real government of his team? Is it not practically seen that a skillful commander of one of those huge floating cities, moved by steam on our American waters, manages and works every motion by the waving of a hand, or by signs that pass in silence; issuing no order at all, save in the gentlest undertone of voice? So when there is, or is to be, a real order and law in the house, it will come of no hard and boisterous, or fretful and termagant way of commandment. Gentleness will speak the word of firmness, and firmness will be clothed in the airs of true gentleness.

Nor let any one think that such kind of authority is going to be disrespected or disregarded, because it moves no fright or fear in the subjects. That will depend on the fidelity of the parent to what he has commanded. How many do we see, who fairly rave in authority, and keep the tempest up from morning to night, who never stop to see whether any thing they forbid or command is, in fact, observed! Indeed, they really forget what they have commanded. Their mandates follow so thickly as to crowd one another, and even to successively thrust one another out of remembrance. And the result is that, by this cannonading of popguns, the successive pellets of command-

ment are in turn all blown away. If any thing is fit to be forbidden or commanded, it is fit to be watched and held in faithful account. On this it is that the real emphasis of authority depends, not on the wind-stress of the utterance. Let there be only such and so many things commanded as can be faithfully attended to—these in a gentle and firm voice, as if their title to obedience lay in their own merit—and then let the child be held to a perfectly-inevitable and faithful account; and by that time it will be seen that order and law have a stress of their own, and a power to rule in their own divine right.

THE DYING VOLUNTEER.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” PSALM XXIII, 4.

JOHN LORENZE, a resident of Mullica Hill, Gloster county, New Jersey, enlisted as a private in the Ninth Regiment New Jersey Volunteers, and with his regiment was engaged in the fight at Roanoke Island, February 8, 1862. During the engagement, which lasted for a number of hours, Mr. Lorenze had both his legs shot away just below the knees, and his comrades bore him from the field. But he did not lose his consciousness nor self-control. In speaking of the occurrence he says that a something came and took away his legs, dropping him suddenly to the ground. While he was being borne on the litter to the hospital, he would cheer his comrades, and all whom he met, by his encouraging words and happy manner. In answer to questions regarding himself and his wounds he returned smiling and cheerful answers. During the amputation of the fragments of his limbs necessary to be removed, he retained his spirits, and cheered the surgeons by his pleasant frame of mind. His countenance was an index of the cheerfulness of his feelings; so much so that all who saw him remarked its

pleasant expression. His chaplain first observed him as he lay on the floor of the hospital the day he was wounded. He went to him and asked him where he was wounded. He told him that both his legs were shot away just below the knees. The chaplain then conversed with him a few minutes about his wounds, the suffering he endured, and spoke to him of Jesus—of his love and sustaining grace. The tears filled his eyes. “O,” said he, “Jesus is all my trust. Blessed be his holy name! I do not know what would sustain me if it were not for my blessed Savior.” He asked him if he was a professor of religion. The wounded man replied that he had tried to serve God for a number of years. “I have tried to serve him in the camp, and now he is all my trust.” The tears rolled down his cheeks while he talked. The chaplain left him, promising to see him again, and pray with him; also to write to his wife, informing her of his situation. In the course of the conversation he spoke of his wife and two young children, and said he did not know whether he should live or die; but if it was God’s will that he should live, he thought he might be of some little service to his family; but immediately remarking, “God’s will be done.” All this time the same heavenly smile rested on his face. The chaplain called to see him again the next day—Sabbath—but found him asleep, and did not awake him. He called again on Monday, and conversed with him, finding him still in the same cheerful frame of mind. He then read to him the fifth chapter of second Corinthians, and prayed with him. Before the prayer closed the room was filled with the surgeons and attendants, all of whom were in tears; and the hearty amen which came from the lips of the wounded man was audible to all in the room.

While the chaplain was writing the letter to his wife, he said, “Tell her I am comfortable and cheerful; but, as she is very nervous, do not tell her where I am wounded.” And then he spoke of the surgeons and those who attended him, expressing gratitude for their kindness. “O,” he

said, "they are all so kind to me." The Christian fortitude and heroic faith were marvelous. His loss was so great, and yet under it all he was so happy and confident. A very profane man called to see him, and in speaking of him afterward in the chaplain's presence remarked, that "it would do any one's heart good to look at that man's face. I never saw such a face since I was born. If I had a regiment of such men I could whip the whole South."

THE MAMMOTH HARP OF THE CASTLE.

"I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord." PSALM CXVI, 3.

It is related that in Germany there stood two vast towers, far apart, on the extremes of a castle; and that the old baron to whom the castle belonged, under the influence of some fantastic feeling, stretched huge wires across from one to the other, thus constructing an Eolian harp. Ordinary winds produced no effect upon it; but when fierce storms and mighty winds roused themselves up, and came rushing down the sides of the mountains and through the valleys, and hurtling themselves against those wires, then they began to roll out majestic strains of music.

It is just so with many of the chords of religion and patriotism. They are untouched in times of prosperity, when they are fanned by balmy zephyrs, and regaled by rare perfumes; but when God plays upon them with violent tempests, that bring trouble and suffering, then the deeper tones of our nature sound forth.

A SPIRIT OF TENDERNESS.

"Be kindly affectioned one to another." ROMANS XII, 10.

A HUMAN heart always, and instinctively, warms toward a tearful eye and a tremulous voice, accompanying words of

council. It is not in our ordinary nature to harden itself against that soft persuasion which, in the very emotion of its utterance, demonstrates at once its own genuineness, and the force of its benevolent feeling for us. That soul which shrinks in repugnance from a hard, dry, cold, formal, official manner, and closes its ears against a merely-professional address, will tenderly be moved by a warm-hearted, direct appeal, which is visibly the result of no mere feeling of technical necessity, but the irrepressible outflow of the warm and yearning spirit.

We remember an incident related by Mr. Finney, which forcibly illustrates this. An infidel—iron-plated in his own shell of disbelief and contempt against all common assault—was one day called upon while at work in his shop alone, by a member of a Congregational Church whom he knew lived three miles away. It was a bitter cold day of Winter, and his first emotion was one of wonder as to what could possibly have availed to bring that visitor so far on such a day. The good man came in, and held out his hand to exchange the ordinary salutations. These over he attempted—in vain—to utter himself, till, bursting into tears—with the words, “My *dear* sir, I am greatly concerned for your soul,” he turned, and going out, seated himself in his sleigh to return home. This was a shot from a gun that was new to the infidel, and plunging through all his mailed defense, it went through and through his most vital parts. “Does that man care so much for my soul as to come so far on such a day to speak to me, and then be too strongly moved to be able to fulfill his mission? then surely I ought to care something for my own soul,” was his instant thought; a thought which under fostering grace grew to be the seed of eternal life in his before icy heart. Doubtless the experience of every true believer who has been in the habit of laboring with his fellow-men in the name of Christ, can suggest corroborative instances in proof of the irresistibleness of this tenderness of soul, in giving edge to the weapons of salvation.

FAITHFUL IN FAMILY WORSHIP.

"Do faithfully whatsoever thou doest." 3 JOHN 5.

TIMID and modest Christians sometimes omit family devotion in the presence of distinguished visitors, and it is a sore trial for Christian mothers who maintain a family altar, to lead the devotions before strangers. The following incident may stimulate some fainting heart to fidelity:

Ten years ago, when an unconverted man, I boarded in the family of a pious woman, whose husband was not a Christian. There was a daughter of nineteen, another of fourteen, and a son of ten. Every morning, after breakfast, I heard that humble woman gather her family in the kitchen, and read with them a chapter—"verse about"—in the Bible. Then, as I could not help listening, there was a peculiarity of service which mystified me. At last, I asked one day if I might remain. She hesitated; her daughter blushed, but said I could do so if I really desired it. So I sat down with the rest. They gave me a Testament, and we all read. Then kneeling on the floor, that mother began her prayer audibly for her dear ones there, her husband, and herself; and then pausing a moment, as if to gather her energies or wing her faith, uttered a tender, affectionate supplication for me. She closed, and her daughter began to pray. Poor girl, she was afraid of me; I was from college; I was her teacher; but she tremulously asked for a blessing as usual. Then came the other daughter, and at last the son—the youngest of that circle, who only repeated the Lord's Prayer, with one petition of his own. His amen was said, but no one arose. I knew, on the instant, they were waiting for me. And I—poor prayerless I—had no word to say. It almost broke my heart. I hurried from the room desolate and guilty. A few weeks only passed, when I asked their permission to come in once more; and then I prayed too, and thanked my ever-patient Savior for the new hope in my heart, and the new song on

my lip. It is a great thing to remember that there is in the Gospel, as in the law, provision made not only for "thy son and thy daughter, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant," but also even "for the stranger that is within thy gates."

THE UNKNOWN PILOT.

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" GENESIS XVIII, 25.

I RECOLLECT that, when a lad, I was crossing the East River, from New York to Brooklyn, on a very foggy day, in a small ferry-boat. My father, and several other individuals belonging to the same company with myself, were desirous of going to Flushing, on Long Island, to attend a meeting. It was necessary, therefore, to cross the river early, and when we arrived at the foot of Fulton-street we found that the steamboat had just left the wharf. Being unwilling to wait for its return, we made a party, with the passengers who stood on the ground, sufficient to tempt the ferrymen to put off in a small boat, and convey us across the river. The ferrymen hesitated for some time, but at length the offer of a sufficient reward induced them to set out. The reason of their objection to starting was, that the thick fog rendered the passage uncertain. They could scarcely see from one end of the boat to the other; and much they feared that they would lose their way, and row about the river for several hours to no purpose.

At length we set out, the ferrymen magnifying the difficulties of the passage as much as possible, in order to enhance the value of their services. When we first left the wharf, a stranger stepped toward the stern of the boat, and took the helm. Every eye was fixed on him who had assumed this responsible station, from which every passenger had shrunk. But now that one of their number had seen fit to take the command of the boat, on whose skill and knowledge solely depended the success of our little voyage, every one was disposed to criticise him. There

could be no doubt that if he failed to bring us safely to the landing-place on the opposite side of the river, he would be obliged to endure the reproaches of every one who had embarked. Indeed, it was soon perceived that some were unwilling to wait for his failure before they gave vent to their feelings. Thinking it a matter of certainty that he could not find the way to the ferry stairs during a fog as impenetrable as midnight darkness, they began to murmur in anticipation. The ferrymen were the first to evince their uneasiness, by casting glances at each other, which were noticed by the passengers and regarded as prognostic of ill success. One of the passengers then asked the stranger at the helm if he did not think he was going too far up the river. The stranger at the helm bowed, and made answer that if any other gentleman present wished to take the helm, he would resign it to his charge; from which it was readily inferred that, so long as he held his place, he intended to be guided solely by his own judgment. This answer silenced complaint for a time, as no other individual felt disposed to relieve him of his responsibility. But the uneasiness of the passengers increased as we proceeded; and when we became entirely surrounded by a fog, and no object in sight by which our course could be directed, the murmurs and conjectures of the little company were audibly expressed.

“Why do n’t he put the helm up?” said one, nestling in his seat.

“We shall come out somewhere near the navy-yard,” said another.

“He had better let the helm go and trust to the ferrymen,” said a lady present.

“Why do n’t he keep the tiller to him?” said an elderly black woman, anxiously.

As the stranger paid no attention to these remarks, his silence was set down for obstinacy; and I am afraid that a few observations were added which somewhat exceeded the bounds of civility. The stranger evidently heard these injurious observations, for he made answer again, that if any

gentleman wished to take the helm, he would resign it to his hand. Just about this time a dark object appeared on the water, and, as it became more visible through the fog, it was recognized as a vessel which lay at anchor between the landing-places on each side of the river. This convinced every one that, so far, the stranger had gone correctly as if the bright sun had shone unclouded upon the river; and silence was at once restored. All murmurs were hushed; satisfaction appeared upon every countenance. But the vessel soon faded again in the mist, and again nothing but fog and water surrounded us. Dissatisfaction once more prevailed, and the steersman received a great many instructions in his duty, to which he paid no heed, and only returned the answer, as before, that he was willing to resign his station to any one who would accept it.

After a great deal of fretting and needless discomposure, the travelers perceived land dimly emerging through the dense fog of the morning. Shapeless and unusual as every thing appeared, it is no wonder that some imagined they had reached the navy-yard, about a mile above the landing-place. But all doubts were at an end when the prow of the boat struck the ferry stairs, and we discovered that the stranger had conveyed us straight as an arrow to our point of destination!

Many years have passed away since the occurrence of this event, yet occasions which have taken place have frequently brought it to my recollection. When I find fault with the ordering of Providence; when I hear men undertake to account for his operations who maketh darkness his pavilion, and whose ways are past finding out; when I see the good distressed, and apparently ready to murmur at the doings of Heaven, I remember the man at the helm, and I say to myself, that, however inscrutable may be the great Father of life, and however he may suffer darkness and doubt to overshadow our souls, he knows what is better for us, and in the end makes all things work together for good to those who love and trust him. We have a Pilot at the

helm of the universe who can see through the mists that envelop us, and will bring his ransomed people safe to the haven of eternal rest.

THE PREACHER AND DANIEL CLARK, THE OLD BRICKLAYER.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." ISAIAH XXXII, 20.

"Good morning, Parson Hubbard. I called to bring a little bill which I have against you. If it's convenient, I should like to have you settle it, as I am going out of town to-morrow."

The minister looked as if a blow had struck him. He knew what Daniel Clark's bill was for. As a stone-mason the man had been employed to lay the brick in Mrs. Hubbard's grave. It had hurt the feelings of the mourning husband that so wicked a man had been engaged to do it. But he had been assured by his deacons that Daniel Clark was a good workman, and that no one else could be found to perform the labor in season. Mr. Hubbard had hoped that he should not see the man himself, and for that purpose had requested his friend Deacon Ward to settle with him. But the Deacon being absent when Mr. Clark happened to want the money, the latter went directly to the minister.

Mr. Hubbard knew the man as a bold transgressor; and was loth to connect him with any ministrations to his lamented dead. But Dan Clark had no soft scruples, and immediately tendered the bill of which he had spoken.

"It is two dollars, I believe," said the minister, without opening the paper; "here is your money, Mr. Clark."

"Yes: thank you," replied the mason, as the amount was laid in his hand. "You see, parson," he added, apologetically, "I should n't have called for the money so soon, only I am going away, and may be gone a year or two. And I did n't know as I should find you here when I

came back ; ministers do n't stay always in one place, you know."

A serious thought flashed upon Mr. Hubbard—a thought which conquered his repulsion to Daniel Clark, and warmed his heart to duty toward him. He spoke quickly and earnestly.

"You did right, Mr. Clark, to bring your bill. Your work was well done, I am told ; and I thank you for it. If you are going away, I may never see you again, as you truly intimated. But I can not let you go without a word of counsel. For though you are not one of my parishioners, you are at least a fellow-townsmen, and—"

"O, parson, do n't preach me a sermon," interrupted the godless man. "I have n't heard one in thirteen years, and I'm in too much of a hurry now."

"I will not bore you, neighbor ; I only want to ask you two questions. If there is no change in your heart and life till some fellow-man performs for you what you have done for my departed one, what will become of you ? If a change is needful, when will you begin to make it ?"

"Those are pretty hard questions, parson ; guess you do n't expect me to answer 'em, though."

"No, Mr. Clark, but I do beg you think of them."

"Well, I can't promise ; but thank 'ee, any way, and good-by."

"Good-by, Mr. Clark." And so the mason went his way.

Two years passed, and Mr. Hubbard sat in his study planning a sermon for the tenth anniversary of his settlement at Rockyville. He was feeling a little despondent over the retrospection of his ministry there. Much good seed had been sown, but it had not sprung up as he hoped to see it. Especially was this the case with the openly wicked. "They will not hear the truth," said the pastor to himself ; "and since Daniel Clark told them of my talk to him, they keep out of speaking distance. I can only pray for them."

The hurried ringing of the door-bell roused the good man from his reverie. Deacon Ward wished to see the pastor. "I know you are engaged to-night, Mr. Hubbard, and I never like to interrupt you. But a sick man wants a visit from you, and I come at his request."

"Who is it, Deacon?"

"It is poor Dan Clark, who went off to the West two years ago. He was coming home on the cars, and got hurt a few miles from here. It is said his back is broken. They have brought him to his old mother, and he is n't expected to live. He wants you to come to him."

"Poor fellow!" thought the minister, as he recalled their parting interview; "he would not promise to consider his latter end, and now it is doubtless too late. I am thankful that I did my duty by him then. Had I suffered him to leave me unwarned, how could I face his dying bed? God keep me from being stained with the blood of souls!" And in solemn silence he departed on his sad errand.

He was tearfully welcomed by the aged mother, and conducted at once to the bedside of her son. But no such mournful scene as he had foreboded met the pastor's eye. The sufferer's look was eager, but not desponding; and as he grasped the minister's hand, he said, "Thank you, thank you; I wanted to see you so much. Those two questions," he continued to say, "those two questions saved me. You remember them?"

The pastor nodded, too much affected for speech.

"I thought of them often; I could not forget them. I would not answer them to you; but I had to give an answer to my own conscience, and it condemned me. That 'needful change,' when should I begin it? 'Now or never,' was the reply of my inward monitor. Ah, how true it has proved! God helped me to turn to him while there was hope. I was coming home to tell my comrades in sin—to tell my dear old mother—that Dan Clark had found a Savior, and to live before them and Heaven a different life."

“But he has only come to die,” said the aged mother, sobbing; “and now he can’t do any good if he would.”

“God be thanked,” said the pastor, “that for him to die will, as we trust, be gain. That it was in his heart to live for Christ is well. God will accept the intention; and he may, perhaps, do more by his death than you think. With him all things are possible.”

It pleased the Lord to fulfill the pastor’s hopes. The dying man lingered many days, and, as his old companions gathered round him at his request, the Holy Spirit made his words persuasive to many a sinful heart. In their presence he was baptized into the name of “the sacred Three in One;” the pastor having replied to his request in the language of Holy Writ, “If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayst.” So Daniel Clark received the seal of his faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God; and when Mr. Hubbard closed the eyes of the dead, he resolved henceforth, God helping, to “sow beside all waters.”



MEDITATION—ITS NECESSITY.

“Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them.” 1 TIMOTHY IV, 15.

MEDITATION is often confounded with something which only partially resembles it. Sometimes we sit in a kind of day-dream, the mind expatiating far away into vacancy, while minutes and hours slip by almost unmarked, in mere vacuity. That is not meditation, but reverie—a state to which the soul resigns itself in pure passivity. When the soul is absent and dreaming, let no man think that that is spiritual meditation, or any thing that is spiritual.

Meditation is partly a passive, partly an active state. Whoever has pondered long over a plan which he is anxious to accomplish, without distinctly seeing at first the way, knows what meditation is. The subject itself presents itself in leisure moments spontaneously; but then all

this sets the mind at work, contriving, imagining, rejecting, modifying. It is in this way that one of the greatest of English engineers, a man uncouth, and unaccustomed to regular discipline of mind, is said to have accomplished his most marvelous triumphs. He threw bridges over almost impracticable torrents, and pierced the eternal mountains for his viaducts. Sometimes a difficulty would bring all the work to a pause; then he would shut himself up in his room, eat nothing, speak to no one, abandon himself intensely to the contemplation of that on which his heart was set; and at the end of two or three days, would come forth serene and calm, walk to the spot, and quietly give orders which seemed the result of superhuman intuition. This was meditation.

He knows, again, what it is, who has ever earnestly and sincerely loved one living human being. The image of his friend rises unbidden by day and night, stands before his soul in the street and in the field, comes athwart his every thought, and mixes its presence with his every plan. So far all is passive. But besides this he plans and contrives for that other's happiness; tries to devise what would give pleasure; examines his own conduct and conversation, to avoid that which can by any possibility give pain. This is meditation.

So, too, is meditation on religious truth carried on. If it first be loved, it will recur spontaneously to the heart.

But then it is dwelt on till it receives innumerable applications; is again and again brought up to the sun and tried in various lights, and so incorporates itself with the realities of practical existence.

Meditation is done in silence. By it we renounce our narrow individuality, and expatiate into that which is infinite. Only in the sacredness of inward silence does the soul truly meet the secret, hiding God. The strength of resolve, which afterward shapes life and mixes itself with action, is the fruit of those sacred, solitary moments. There is a divine depth in silence. We meet God alone.

For this reason I urge it upon you to spend an hour or more each day separate from friends, from books, from every thing human, and to force yourselves into the awful presence.

Have we never felt how human presence, if frivolous, in such moments frivolizes the soul, and how impossible it is to come in contact with any thoughts which are sublime, or drink in one inspiration which is from heaven, without degrading it, even though surrounded by all that would naturally suggest tender and awful feeling, when such are by ?

It is not the number of books you read ; nor the variety of sermons which you hear ; nor the amount of religious conversation in which you mix ; but it is the frequency and the earnestness with which you meditate on these things, till the truth which may be in them becomes your own, and part of your own being, that insures your spiritual growth.—*F. W. Robertson.*



THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." JOHN XIII, 34.

As we mix in life, there comes, especially to sensitive natures, a temptation to distrust. In young life, we throw ourselves with unbounded and glorious confidence on such as we think well of—an error soon corrected ; for we soon find out—too soon—that men and women are not what they seem. Then comes disappointment ; and the danger is a reaction of desolating and universal mistrust. For if we look on the doings of man with a merely worldly eye, and pierce below the surface of character, we are apt to feel bitter scorn and disgust for our fellow-creatures. We have lived to see human hollowness ; the ashes of the Dead Sea shore ; the falseness of what seemed so fair ; the mouldering beneath the whited sepulcher ; and no wonder

if we are tempted to think "friendship *all* cheat—smiles hypocrisy—words deceit;" and they who are what is called *knowing* in life contract by degrees, as the result of their experience, a hollow distrust of men, and learn to sneer at apparently good motives. That demoniacal sneer which we have seen, ay perhaps felt, curling the lip at times, "Doth Job serve God for naught?"

The only preservative from this withering of the heart is love. Love is its own perennial fount of strength. The strength of affection is a proof not of the worthiness of the object, but of the largeness of the soul which loves. Love descends, not ascends. The might of a river depends not on the quality of the soil through which it passes, but on the inexhaustibleness and depth of the spring from which it proceeds. The greater mind cleaves to the smaller with more force than the other to it. A parent loves the child more than the child the parent; and partly because the parent's heart is larger, not because the child is worthier. The Savior loved his disciples infinitely more than his disciples him, because his heart was infinitely larger. Love trusts on—ever hopes and expects better things, and this, a trust springing from itself and out of its own deeps alone.

And more than this. It is this *trusting* love that makes men what they are trusted to be, so realizing itself. Would you make men *trustworthy*? Trust them. Would you make them true? Believe them. This was the real force of that sublime battle-cry which no Englishman hears without emotion. When the crews of the fleet of Britain knew that they were *expected* to do their duty, they *did* their duty. They felt in that spirit-stirring sentence that they were trusted; and the simultaneous cheer that rose from every ship was a forerunner of victory—the battle was half-won already. They went to serve a country which expected from them great things; and they *did* great things. Those pregnant words raised an enthusiasm for the chieftain who had thrown himself upon his men in trust, which a double

line of hostile ships could not appall, nor decks drenched in blood extinguish.

And it is on this principle that Christ wins the hearts of his redeemed. He trusted the doubting Thomas; and Thomas arose with a faith worthy "of his Lord and his God." He would not suffer even the lie of Peter to shake his conviction that Peter might love him yet; and Peter answered to that sublime forgiveness. His last prayer was extenuation and hope for the race who had rejected him—and the kingdoms of the world are become his own. He has loved us, God knows why—I do not—and we, all unworthy though we be, respond faintly to that love, and try to be what he would have us.

Therefore, come what may, hold fast to love. Though men should rend your heart, let them not embitter or harden it. We win by tenderness; we conquer by forgiveness. O, strive to enter into something of that large celestial charity which is meek, enduring, unretaliating, and which even the overbearing world can not withstand forever. Learn the new commandment of the Son of God. Not to love, but to love as he loved. Go forth in this spirit to your life-duties; go forth, children of the Cross, to carry every thing before you, and win victories for God by the conquering power of a love like his.—*F. W. Robertson.*

THE TWELVE APOSTLES IN SILVER.

"Whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 JOHN III, 17.

WHEN Oliver Cromwell visited Yorkminster Cathedral, in England, his attention was drawn to twelve statues of the apostles in silver, which stood in their appropriate niches, near the ceiling of one of the apartments. Looking upon them for a moment, he inquired, "Who are those fellows standing yonder?" "The twelve apostles," was

the answer. "Take them down, and let them go about doing good," instantly rejoined Cromwell; and down they came, and were melted into coin, and put into circulation. So let a right sentiment as to Christian stewardship once obtain, and many a wealthy professor, as he surveyed his splendid establishment, would be constrained to convert his extravagant decorations and costly plate into money for the Lord's treasury; thus sending them forth on the sublime errand of doing good.

THE ROCK THAT IS HIGHER THAN I.

"From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." PSALM LXI, 2.

A few years since some travelers were journeying in the vicinity of the Pyrenees. Terrific storms are common to that region; and these travelers were alarmed by the sudden appearance of huge masses of clouds in the angry sky, betokening the approach of no ordinary tempest. While viewing these omens with sensations of terror, a sharp voice broke upon their ears, shouting, "To the rock! to the rock!" Looking round, they saw the speaker, a French peasant, pointing to a mass of rock near by, which overhung the road, and offered them a place of shelter. They hastened to this friendly cave. Just as they reached it, the thunder boomed athwart the sky, the rain poured down in torrents, and the storm came rushing from the hills, sweeping every thing from their path. Securely placed beneath the shelter of their friendly rock, our travelers, though trembling at what they saw and heard, escaped the danger. When the storm was overpast, they renewed their journey with hearts swelling with gratitude for their preservation.

In this incident we see how the presence of danger impressed those travelers with so profound a sense of their own weakness, as to qualify them to fully appreciate the value of the sheltering rock to which the peasant directed

them. In like manner it would seem that the royal Psalmist, beset with difficulties, threatened by storms, and circumvented by the malicious schemes of bad men, felt himself unspeakably impotent. He had no confidence in the adequacy of his own power to overcome the dangers frowning upon him. Hence, casting aside all self-dependence, he lifted his beseeching eyes to God. Gazing on the divine Omnipotence, he beheld Jehovah under the image of a vast rock, whose foundations and summits were alike lost in the Infinite, and within whose shelter he would be absolutely and eternally safe. The idea met his soul's aspiration, and he poured forth his prayer, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." God heard his prayer. He became conscious of the all-surrounding presence of the Infinite. His heart grew quiet; and, confident of safety, he poured forth a tide of triumphant song, in anticipation of eternal participation in the joys of the Lord.

And what David did we may also do. When we are threatened by storms too terrible for our puny strength to brave; when disaster rolls like a mountain-flood upon our path; when fierce lightnings gleam angrily from our social sky; when adversity strips us of property; when unfeeling malice shoots poisonous darts at our reputation; when enemies misrepresent and friends misunderstand us; when death lays the darlings of our affection low; when we are left desolate and unfriended in the wastes of life—then, O, then should our eyes be uplifted, and our voices heard, crying, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I!" For, in such hours, all strength of mind, all human confidence, are vain. The mightiest minds can not stand erect amidst the desolations of life, if unsheltered by the Rock of Ages. Even Napoleon, though intellectually a giant, reeled and staggered like a tottering infant when he saw the hand of Providence uplifted against him—when he heard the storms of retribution howling around him. Then, though his will had always been like iron, he became weak and infirm of

purpose; he hesitated, resolved, hesitated again, and finally fled—a melancholy spectacle of the helplessness of man when he dares the perils of life unprotected by the Rock that is higher than himself. His example is a lesson to all ages. It teaches every man to shun his proud habit of self-dependence; to learn the way to the shelter of the eternal Rock; to cry, with David, “Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I!”



THE TWO STREAMS.

“If the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there shall it be.” ECCLESIASTES XI, 3.

THE present determines the future state. You can reject the wooing of the Spirit of God, and secure for yourself eternal banishment from his presence and the glory of his power. You can, with the help of the same Spirit, bring yourself into communion with Heaven, and enjoy the bliss of the redeemed and sanctified forever.

“Behold the rocky wall
That down its sloping sides
Pours the swift rain-drops, blending as they fall,
In rushing river tides!

Yon stream, whose sources run,
Turned by a pebble's edge,
Is Athabasca, rolling toward the sun
Through the cleft mountain ledge.

The slender rill had strayed,
But for the slanting stone,
To evening's ocean, with the tangled braid
Of foam-flecked Oregon.

So from the heights of Will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill
Each widening torrent bends.

From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee,
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the peaceful sea.”

THE SOUL'S CRISIS.

"My Spirit shall not always strive with man." GENESIS VI, 3.

LET every man consider that he is dependent upon the Spirit of God, which may at any time leave him to himself.

In this respect, he may be compared to a ship on the Niagara River, between Lake Erie and the Falls. The calm, still waters of the lake are above it, the thundering precipice below, and all the way between a constantly-increasing current, bearing it downward; while a propitious breeze is blowing toward the lake, sufficient to overcome the power of the current and waft it upward to the lake. But the sails are all furled; the captain and all on board wish to enjoy the pleasant scenery around them. Some doubt whether there is any cataract; others think and know there is, but that it is so far off that it need not be feared yet; they can turn at any time. Thus they float merrily along, amid wine, and song, and revelry, so intent upon their pleasure that for hours they do not notice a fearful fact, that the wind has ceased to blow. At length they are roused from their dream of security, and look out upon the calm, blue heavens; not a leaf moves. They are filled with dismay. The captain cries out, "About ship—put on all her canvas!" "Ay, ay, sir," replies the helmsman, and the helm is "hard up." The sails are spread, but they flap against the masts. There is no power to the helm. She turns her prow to the lake of safety; but it is only to float backward down the stream. The current increases; they shriek aloud for help; but help can not come. They ply the oars, but there is no perceptible check to the descent. Islands and green banks seem to be gliding past them like magic; the thundering roar of the cataract is heard; now they enter the curling and eddying rapids; a few moments of agonizing cries of despair, and a few of breathless, silent, shivering expectation, and the noble ship plunges into the abyss, and is dashed to atoms. But when was that ship lost? Not merely when it struck

the foaming flood, but when the wind ceased to blow upon it, as it floated quietly on that smooth stream; when the only agency that could possibly arrest its downward course ceased to act; then destruction was as sure as at the last moment.

In like manner, the soul that God has left may float down the stream of time, and dream of safety and future repentance, while it is lost. Its day of merciful visitation is passed. "The door is shut."



PEACE! PEACE!

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem." PSALM CXX, 6.

AT the close of the last war with Great Britain the prospects of this country were gloomy in the extreme. Commissioners of the United States were deputed to Ghent. For some time nothing was heard from them. Late on a Saturday afternoon, in February, a ship was discovered in the offing, New York city, which was supposed to be a cartel, bringing home our commissioners at Ghent from their mission. The sun had set gloomily before any intelligence from the vessel had reached the city. Expectation became intense as the hours of darkness drew on. At length a boat reached the wharf, announcing the fact that a treaty of peace had been signed. The men on whose ears these words first fell, rushed in breathless haste into the city, to repeat them to their friends, shouting, as they ran through the streets, peace! peace! peace! Every one who heard the sound repeated it. The news spread with electric rapidity. The whole city was in commotion. Men bearing lighted torches were flying to and fro, shouting like madmen, peace! peace! peace! Few slept. One idea occupied the mind; and every one becoming a herald, the news soon reached every man, woman, and child in the city.

Would the news of "peace on earth" spread with less rapidity through the whole world, were each disciple to thus

promptly *act his* part in its promulgation? Suppose the work of evangelizing the world be commenced in the ministry of a single believer; and suppose his labors and prayers, during one year, to result in the conversion of a single individual; then suppose these two to labor the second year with the same result, each of them being instrumental in the conversion of another, so that a little band of four brethren enter on the third year—taking the population of the globe at nine hundred millions, and supposing their agency to advance thus by geometrical progression, long before the first laborer, in the ordinary course of nature, should be gathered to his fathers, there would not be left a single outcast on earth beyond the blessed fraternity of faith and love!

TRACKS IN THE SNOW.

“I press toward the mark.” PHILIPPIANS III, 14.

WE very often miss the end of life by having no object before us. Our work is done with our eyes bandaged. We play blindfold with the world's evils, and accomplish, in consequence, but little good, or, at the most, secure but feeble reforms. To conquer you must know you have a foe, and what, and where, and with what weapons to fight. Years ago—when we were a boy—a pupil in an old frame school-house by the foot of a hill to the south of the village, we went with a number of boys, one afternoon in Winter, to have some sport. A meadow was distant half a mile away. A light snow had fallen, and the company desired to make the most of it. It was too dry for snow-balling, and not deep enough for coasting. It did very well to make tracks in.

It was proposed that we should go to a tree near the center of the meadow, and that each one should start from the tree, and see who could make the straightest track—that is, to go from the tree in the nearest approach to a straight line. The proposition was assented to, and we were all soon at the

tree. We ranged ourselves around it with our backs toward the trunk. We were equally distant from each other. If each had gone forward in the right line, the paths we made would have been like the spokes of a wheel—the tree representing the hub. We were to go till we reached the boundaries of the meadow, when we were to trace our steps to the tree.

We did so. I wish I could give a map of our tracks. Such a map would not present much resemblance to the spokes of a wheel.

“Whose is the straightest?” said James Alison to Thomas Sanders, who was at the tree first.

“Henry Armstrong’s is the only one that is straight at all.”

“That’s a fact,” said James. “They look more like snake-tracks than straight lines.”

“How could we all contrive to go so crookedly, when the ground is so smooth, and nothing to turn us out of the way?” said Jacob Small.

“How did you come to go straight, Henry?” said Thomas.

“I fixed my eye on that tall pine-tree on the hill yonder, and never looked away from it till I reached the fence.”

“I went as straight as I could, without looking at any thing but the ground,” said James.

“So did I,” said another.

“So did I,” said several others. It appeared that no one but Henry had aimed at a particular object.

We attempted to go straight without any definite aim. We failed. So it will be with men forever, who have no mark in view. General purposes, general resolutions, will not avail. We must do as Henry did: fix upon something distinct and definite as an object, and go steadily forward toward it. Thus only can we succeed.

Multitudes of Christians go through life without having led one single soul to Christ, and all because they never had a single aim to his glory.

THE RAILWAY TRACK AND THE LOCOMOTIVE.

"Your reasonable service." ROMANS XII, 1.

Go with me to the next station-house, and look off upon that line of railroad. It is as straight as an arrow. Out run the iron lines, glittering in the sun—out, as far as we can see, till, converging almost to a single thread, they pierce the sky. What were those rails laid in that way for? It is a road, is it? Try your cart or your coach there. The axletrees are too narrow, and you go bumping along upon the sleepers. Try a wheelbarrow. You can not keep it on the rail. But that road was made for something. Now go with me to the locomotive shop. What is this? We are told it is a locomotive. What is a locomotive? Why, it is a carriage moved by steam. But it is very heavy. The wheels would sink into a common road to the axle. That locomotive can never run on a common road, and the man is a fool who built it. Strange that men will waste time and money in that way! But stop a moment. Why would n't those wheels just fit those rails? We measure them, and then we go to the track and measure its gauge. That solves the difficulty. Those rails were intended for the locomotive, and the locomotive for the rails. They are good for nothing apart. The locomotive is not even safe any where else. If it should get off, after it is once on, it would run into rocks and stumps, and bury itself in sands or swamps beyond recovery.

Young man, you are a locomotive. You are a thing that goes by a power planted inside of you. You are made to go. In fact, considered as a machine, you are very far superior to a locomotive. The maker of the locomotive is man; your Maker is man's maker. You are as different from a horse, or an ox, or a camel, as a locomotive is different from a wheelbarrow, a cart, or a coach. Now do you suppose that the being who made you—manufactured your machine, and put into it the motive power—did not make a

special road for you to run upon? My idea of religion is that it is a railroad for a human locomotive, and that just so sure as it undertakes to run upon a road adapted only to animal power, will it bury its wheels in the sand, dash itself among rocks, and come to inevitable wreck. If you don't believe this, try the other thing. Here are forty roads: suppose you choose one of them, and see where you come out. Here is the dram-shop road. Try it. Follow it, and see how long it will be before you come to a stump and a smash-up. Here is the road of sensual pleasure. You are just as sure to bury your wheels in the dirt as you try it. Your machine is too heavy for that track altogether. Here is the winding, uncertain path of frivolity. There are morasses on each side of it, and, with the headway that you are under, you will be sure, sooner or later, to pitch into one of them. Here is the road of philosophy, but it runs through a country from which the light of heaven is shut out; and while you may be able to keep your machine right side up, it will only be by feeling your way along in a clumsy, comfortless kind of style, and with no certainty of ever arriving at the heavenly station-house. Here is the road of skepticism. That is covered with fog, and a fence runs across it within ten rods. Don't you see that your machine was never intended to run on those roads? Don't you *know* that it never was, and don't you know that the only track under heaven upon which it can run safely is the religious track? Don't you know that just as long as you keep your wheels on that track, wreck is impossible? Don't you know that it is the only track on which wreck is not certain? I know it, if you don't; and I tell you that on that track which God has laid down expressly for your soul to run upon, your soul will find free play for all its wheels, and an unobstructed and happy progress. It is straight and narrow, but it is safe and solid, and furnishes the only direct route to the heavenly city. Now, if God made your soul, and made religion for it, you are a fool if you refuse to place yourself on the track.

The race to which you belong have all fallen from innocence, and they have so thoroughly put out the lights that God meant should light every man who comes into the world, that, supplementary to the natural moral system, He has, in great benevolence, devised a scheme of religion, embracing salvation. This is Christianity, and its purpose is to get you back upon the track where the race first started. It is a divine contrivance, or plan, for accomplishing this purpose.

Jesus Christ saw the whole mass of human machinery off the track, and going to irremediable ruin just so truly as he did not interfere to prevent it. He came and told us all how to get back, through repentance, faith, reformation, the surrender of will, the abnegation of self, and the devotion of the heart in love to God and good-will to men. He placed himself upon the track and ran over it, not only showing us how to get there ourselves, but showing us how to run when there. In other words, he exhibited to us a true human life. Then, when he had cleared away all the rubbish from the track, shown us how to get upon it again, how to run when we get there, how to avoid and repair accidents by the way—when he had done all this, and set his agents to work in carrying out his plans, he went back to heaven, and now looks down to see how the work goes on.

To yourself, without religion, you are worth very little. A man whose aims are low, whose motives are selfish, who has in his heart no adoration for the great God, and no love of his Christ, whose will is not subordinate to the Supreme will—gladly and gratefully—who has no faith, no tenable hope of a happy immortality, no strong-armed trust that with his soul it shall be well in future, can not be worth very much to himself. Neither can such a man be worth very much to society, because he has not that to bestow which society most needs for its prosperity and its happiness. A locomotive off the track is worth nothing to its owner or the public so long as it is off the track. The conditions of its legitimate and highest value are not complied

with. It can not be operated satisfactorily to the owner, or usefully to the public, because it is not where it was intended to run by the man who made it.—*J. G. Holland, M. D.*

PATIENCE AND PROGRESS.

"Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." PSALM XXXVII, 7.

If the husbandman, disappointed at the delay which ensues before the blade breaks the soil, were to rake away the earth to examine if germination were going on, he would have a poor harvest. He must have "long patience, till he receive the early and the latter rain." The Winter frost must mellow the seed lying in the genial bosom of the earth; the rains of Spring must swell it, and the suns of Summer mature it. So with you. It is the work of a long life to become a Christian. Many, O! many a time, are we tempted to say, "I make no progress at all. It is only failure after failure. Nothing grows." Now look at the sea when the flood is coming in. Go and stand by the seabeach, and you will think that the ceaseless flux and reflux is but retrogression equal to the advance. But look again in an hour's time, and the whole ocean has advanced. Every advance has been beyond the last, and every retrograde movement has been an imperceptible trifle less than the last. This is progress; to be estimated at the end of hours, not minutes. And this is *Christian* progress. Many a fluctuation—many a backward motion with a rush at times so vehement that all seems lost—but if the eternal work be real, every failure has been a real gain, and the next does not carry us so far back as we were before. Every advance is a real gain, and part of it is never lost. Both when we advance and when we fail, we gain. We are nearer to God than we were. The flood of spirit-life has carried us up higher on the everlasting shores, where the waves of life beat no more, and its fluctuations end, and all is safe at last. "This is the faith and patience of the saints."

THE OLD CLASS-LEADER.

"He was a burning and a shining light." JOHN V, 35.

It is the life, not the profession, that wins; the heart, not the tongue, that takes captive. At a small town in Yorkshire, England, died August 18, 1853, an aged Wesleyan class-leader, named John Read. He was of very obscure parentage, and had his living to obtain by what was called clogging. Part of the labor of clogging consisted in cutting down trees, and preparing them for various kinds of handicraft. Though very poor, he always gave something weekly to the cause of religion or benevolence. Almost every one in the town of Settle, where he lived, knew John Read, the class-leader, and all loved him. He had the faculty of being ready with a good word for religion wherever he happened to be. An early member of Mr. Read's class relates that upon his first visit to their house, one of the first things that he did was to ask her if she loved God. The question was asked in such a way, and with such a tone of voice, and expression of countenance, as to touch her heart. She shortly after became pious, and was fifty years an exemplary member of the British Wesleyan Church. At another time, visiting the father of the late Matthias Wildman, Yorkshire, he heard young Matthias, who was a wicked young man, humming a favorite song. "Well, my lad," said Mr. Read, "will you come to meeting to-night, and help us sing?" He replied, "I don't care if I do." The word spoken that night in the meeting pierced deep into young Wildman's breast, and he became afterward a flaming light.

An infidel of Settle was supposed to be dying, and his wife became greatly concerned for him. "Shall I not send for some one to pray with you?" said she to her husband. A moment's pause ensued. "No, no; you need not send for any one except old Mr. Read, the class-leader. I know the old man. His life is in the right. Send for him." And

the old leader came and prayed. The infidel was raised to health again, and became a pious and useful man.

Prayer—secret prayer—was the habit of his life. He made his little shop back of his dwelling the place where he called upon the Lord. When death came every thing was in order, and he was ready for the transfer. To an intimate friend he said, “It is all right now; I have a clear prospect; give my love to all my friends;” and then sweetly fell asleep. A few weeks before his death, a friend said to another, as he beheld old John at his bench, “There sits a man who is the brother of the Lord Jesus; his locks are white, and when like snows they melt in the silence of the grave, there will be a great flood.” It was even so; for when the old class-leader was carried to his rest, many followed his remains, and scarcely a dry eye was observed in all the multitude of mourners.

You want to do good. Remember that the most effectual means of accomplishing that result is by example. He who exhibits those excellences in his life which he proclaims with his tongue, will appear the most amiable and prove the most useful. A fine genius, a retentive memory, an eloquent tongue, may be desirable; but an enlightened mind and uniform life are every way superior.

It is observed of Cæsar, that he never said to his soldiers, “ite,” go on; but “venite,” come on, or follow me. So our great Exemplar, while he commands us to duty, hath shown us the way. “Follow me,” is the divine injunction.

Two architects were once candidates for the building of a certain temple at Athens. The first harangued the crowd very learnedly upon the different orders of architecture, and showed them in what manner the temple should be built. The other, who got up after him, only observed, “That what his brother had spoken he could do;” and thus he at once gained the cause.

Such is the force of example, that even our enemies are sometimes penetrated with admiration, and constrained to bear a testimony in our favor. It is observed of Bishop

Jewel, that his affability of behavior and sanctity of life made a fierce and bigoted Papist sometimes say to him, "I should love thee, Jewel, if thou wert not a Zuinglian. In thy faith thou art a heretic; but surely in thy life thou art an angel. Thou art very good and honest, but a Lutheran."

Lord Peterborough, more famed for wit than religion, when he lodged with Fenelon, at Cambray, was so charmed with the virtue and piety of the archbishop, that he exclaimed at parting, "If I stay here any longer, I shall become a Christian in spite of myself."

THE WINTER AND SUMMER STORM.

"Shall tribulation separate us from the love of Christ?" ROM. VIII, 35.

How different are Summer storms from Winter ones! In Winter they rush over the earth with all their violence; and if any poor remnants of foliage or flowers have lingered behind, these are swept along at one gust. Nothing is left but desolation, and long after the rain has ceased pools of water and mud bear token of what has been. But when the clouds have poured out their torrents in Summer, when the winds have spent their fury, and the sun breaks forth again in its glory, all things seem to rise with renewed loveliness from their refreshing bath. The flowers, glistening with rain-drops, smell sweeter than before; the grass seems to have gained another brighter shade of green; and the young plants, which had hardly come into sight, have taken their place among their fellows in the borders, so quickly have they sprung up under the showers. The air, too, which may previously have been oppressive, is become clear, and soft, and fresh.

Such is the difference when the storms of affliction fall on our hearts unrenewed by Christian faith, and on those who abide in Christ. In the former they bring out the dreariness and desolation which may before not have been

apparent. The gloom is not relieved by the prospect of any cheering ray to follow it—of any flowers or fruit to show its beneficence. But in the truly-Christian soul, “though weeping endure for a night, joy comes in the morning.” A sweet smile of hope and love follows every tear, and tribulation itself is turned into the chief of blessings.

THE GREAT STANDARD.

“The law of the Lord is perfect.” PSALM XIX, 7.

WRITERS on the higher mathematics tell us that the bending of a curve is measured by its deviation from its tangent. Of two curves, that one is said to have the greater curvature, which departs more rapidly and widely from a tangent line. The latter, of course, is a perfectly-straight line, or at least the visible representative of the abstract idea of absolute straightness. It serves, therefore, as a standard of comparison, by means of which to estimate with the utmost accuracy the precise direction of any and every curved line.

So is it in morals, if we may be allowed to draw an illustration of Divine truth and human experience from a sphere of imagery not often entered by religious writers. The crookedness of a man's principles and disposition, of his character and life, may be measured by the extent of their deflection from the moral law, contained in the Bible, which is the tangent line of truth and righteousness; of faith, worship, and practice—the only-unerring criterion of moral rectitude. The more wildly a human being deviates from the law of God, the more unholy, unhappy, and injurious he becomes; and the more closely he keeps to that rule of right, the more holy, happy, and useful he is, and ever will be.

There ought to be a certain parallelism, to continue our mathematical similitude, between a man's life and character on the one hand, and the Word of God on the other.

A perfect coincidence of the two objects is, of course, not to be expected in this life. A man will always be below his standard, especially if that standard is a lofty one, and, therefore, his attainments in religious knowledge and Christian virtue will always fall far short of the high pinnacle of excellence set up on the pages of revealed Truth. Nevertheless, an individual may so live as to demonstrate that his actions are influenced and regulated by God's law, and that his aim is to walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless. Nothing less than such intentions and endeavors is compatible with even moderate measures of spiritual vitality and growth.

There is a pernicious and deplorable tendency, even in sanctified human nature, to depress and modify the moral standard of the Bible—to lower it down to the level of human capability, and to alter and explain away many of its requisitions. There is an unhappy and very prevalent disposition likewise to substitute some other standard for that of Divine origin and authority. This error may be rather practical than theoretical. Still its influence is bad in an untold degree. A Wilberforce was scarcely needed to declare these sad facts, for they are patent to all of any observation, and their effect upon the condition of the Church and world is greatly evil.

What is my standard of morality is a pertinent and important question for every professor of Christ's religion. Is fashion, or the practice of my neighbor, or public opinion, my criterion of truth and virtue? Do I bow with lowlier reverence to the Dagon of this world than to the great Jehovah? Do I render to the moral canons of the thoughtless and unholy that homage which is due only to the dictates of Inspiration, as interpreted by my own judgment, rationally and prayerfully exercised? How few there are who could honestly answer these inquiries in the affirmative! How few even seriously propound them!—*Dr. John Hart.*

OUR RELIGION DIFFUSIVE.

"What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops." MATTHEW x, 27.

THE Gospel having come to us, by us it must go further. For as nothing in nature is beautiful except so far as it has the power of reflecting light; as the crystal takes that very light by which it is illumined, and lets it stream through it, or reflects it from it; so every heart that has been made light must let that light go through it, or reflect from it that by which it is itself made radiant. No man may receive the hope of salvation and the joy of pardon, and keep the news to himself. The man that has walked in the garden of the Lord can not keep the secret. Our very raiment exhales spice and odor if we have been there. It is scarcely a figure that the face of Moses shone when he went down from the mount; and he had no occasion to say, "I have seen the Lord." And if one has walked in the very presence of Christ, and heard the Master say to him, "Thou art mine, and thine is the eternal inheritance," there is no suppression of the fact. There is no privacy, and there can be none, in the gladness and joy which comes from sin pardoned, and a soul saved. And every man that is born in the kingdom of God becomes, from that very moment, in his degree and sphere, a preacher of the glad tidings of salvation.

THE LAND BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS.

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." PSALM VIII, 2.

THE little child was dying. His weary limbs were racked with pain no more. The flush was fading from his thin cheeks, and the fever that had been for weeks drying up his blood, was now cooling rapidly under the touch of the icy hand that was upon him.

There were sounds and tokens of bitter but suppressed

grief in that dim chamber, for the dying boy was one very dear to many hearts.

They knew that he was departing, and the thought was hard to bear; but they tried to command their feelings, that they might not disturb the last moments of their darling.

The father, and mother, and the kind physician stood beside dear Eddy's bed, and watched his heavy breathing. He had been silent for some time, and appeared to sleep. They thought it might be thus that he would pass away; but suddenly his blue eyes opened wide and clear, and a beautiful smile broke over his features. He looked upward and forward first; then turning his eyes upon his mother's face, said, in a sweet voice:

"Mother, what is the name of the beautiful country that I see beyond the mountains—the high mountains?"

"I can see nothing, my child," said the mother; "there are no mountains in the sight of our house."

"Look there, dear mother," said the child, pointing upward; "yonder are the mountains. Can you not see them now?" he asked in tones of the greatest astonishment, as his mother shook her head. "They are near me now—so large and high, and behind them the country looks so beautiful, and the people are so happy—*there are no sick children there!* Papa, can you not see behind the mountains? Tell me the name of that land."

The parents glanced at each other, and with united voices they replied: "The land you see is heaven—is it not, my child?"

"Yes, it is heaven. I thought that must be the name. O, let me go! But how shall I cross those mountains? Father, will you not carry me? Take me in your arms and carry me, for they call me from the other side, and I must go."

There was not a dry eye in that chamber, and upon every heart there fell a solemn awe, as if the curtain which concealed its mysteries was about to be withdrawn.

"O mother! O father! do not cry, but come with me

and cross the mountains! O come!" And thus he entreated with a strength and earnestness which astonished all.

The chamber was filled with wondering, awe-stricken friends. At length he turned to his mother, with a face beaming with rapturous delight, and stretching out his little arms for the last embrace, he cried: "Good-by, mother; I am going, but don't you be afraid—the strong man has come to carry me over the mountains."

These were his parting words. Upon his mother's breast he breathed his last, and they laid the little fair body down again upon the pillow, and closed the lids over the beautiful blue eyes, over which the mist of death had gathered heavily, and by the bedside they prayed with submissive but bleeding hearts, and said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."



TWO KINDS OF VESSELS.

"None of these things move me." ACTS xx, 24.

THERE are men who teach that the Christian is the creature of mere circumstances; that his character is affected by this and that outward event. That there may be two kinds of religious professors can not be denied; but that there are two kinds of real Christians is not possible. To whom shall we liken the genuine disciple? Yonder, on the sea, is a sail vessel, with its prow toward the harbor. Night and a tempest are coming on, and the winds have begun their revels over the waters. Now that ship has its course true to the desired port; now it goes to the right, now to the left, and now it is driven backward. Yonder, too, is a steamship. It has machinery, sound and well-tried. Its prow is to the harbor too. The waves have begun to run high; the winds are wild; the rain comes rattling down over the sea, and darkness is thick every-where. Is that steamer driven to the right and then to the left? is its course forward and then backward? On, on—right on

through the blinding, rattling tempest and the wild sea is its course, straight for the harbor; and that harbor, at the appointed time, it reaches in safety. Listen to the mighty throbbings of the mighty machinery within; look with what pride and ease each crested billow is crushed beneath its giant tread; and know that it depends not on the outward for its speed, but that it carries its own life and motive power within. Such is the real Christian, carrying, as he does, every-where his own inherent power. Let the heavens gather black with tempests; let men howl scorn and defiance in his ear; let Satan block his path with disasters and opposition; let friends forsake and foes unite; let wealth depart and life itself be taken—none of these things move him from his steadfastness, for his eye is on the distant harbor light, and by and by he will cast anchor.

In his History of the Dutch Republic Mr. Motley tells us of one Titelmann, a blood-red persecutor of the Netherlands. Upon any pretext would he put to death man, woman, or child. Not an *opinion* even could one hold without Titelmann knowing it; and that opinion, if not in consonance with his, was death to the holder of it. There was a poor schoolmaster, Geleyn de Muler, of Audenarde. He had been suspected of Bible reading. Titelmann found him, and his wife, and four children out, and told him that death by fire was his fate if he did not recant.

“Will you give me the benefit of a trial?” said Muler.

“You are my prisoner, and are to answer me and none other,” was the reply.

Some questions were asked by Titelmann, and then followed the demand immediately for Muler to recant. He was for some moments speechless.

“Do you not love your wife and children?” asked the demoniac Titelmann.

“God knows,” said the schoolmaster, “that were the heavens a pearl and the earth a globe of gold, and were I the owner of all, most cheerfully would I give them all to live with my wife and children, even though our lives

must be passed in prison, and our fare be only bread and water."

It was enough. Muler was strangled, and his body burned, and then scattered to the winds of heaven. Such faith, such power as to let nothing move the heart from its hold on Christ, how much is it needed in this world!

TAKING UP YOUR CROSS.

"And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." MATTHEW x, 38.

WHEN a man first begins a Christian life, he is like a man that is just beginning to set up letters in a printing office. When a man commences type-setting, he takes the stick in his hand, and looks at the manuscript to see what the first letter is, and says, where is E? He hunts up the letter; and then he is puzzled to know which end to put it in. After some hesitation he puts it in; but he gets it upside down. In turning it over he gets the nick the wrong way. Finally he gets that letter in as it should be. And then he says, Where is R? And he has another hunt for R. And when he has found it, he makes several trials before he gets it right. And in setting up every single letter, he has to go through the process of thinking, "I must find that letter, and put it in its place."—It is slow business, where a man has to think of every thing that he does. But let him work a year. Now he looks at the manuscript, and takes in about two full lines, and is not conscious that he takes them in. The hand thinks for itself. Of its own accord it goes and finds the letters, and puts them right side up, in the right place. No mind-work is required. Very likely the man is carrying on a process of thought about Japan or Burrampooter; or philosophizing about the very things that he is setting up; or laughing at the one that wrote them. The work was a burden to him at first; but the moment the hand was trained to do it

naturally, and without any effort on the part of the mind, it ceased to be a burden.

When a man is asked to teach a Sabbath school class, to pray in the social meeting, to speak in a class-room, or to take part in any religious exercise, his first efforts are awkward, and often confused and confusing. He resolves, "I will try no more—there's no use in it. People don't wish to see me try." Stopping here there is no progress—never can be.

A man beginning the Christian life finds himself troubled with a hot, hasty temper. I say to him, "You should take up the cross and crucify your temper." He says, "I can not do it." "But," I say, "you can do it; for I noticed the other day, when you were at the funeral of your child, that although that stupid undertaker did a most provoking thing, you did not manifest any ill-will." "Of course," he says, "a man would not get angry under such circumstances." "Then there are some cases in which you can bear the cross and crucify your temper; and if you can do it in some cases, you can in others." "Well, I can not bring sufficiently strong motives to bear at all times to enable me to do it." "If you will exercise sufficient will to control your temper, and look to God for his grace, no matter what the circumstances may be, it will not be long before that temper will begin to feel that it must give up, and become perfectly docile and manageable."

A man's temper is very much like a colt. When a colt is first bitted and saddled, it seems as though he would tear the yard all to pieces, and himself with it; but by and by he finds that he can not break the bit, nor throw the man and the saddle from his back. The man sticks to him day after day, and gradually he grows less and less difficult to manage; and in the course of two or three weeks he gets so that he will let the man bit him, and saddle him, and back him without any resistance.

Now, getting astride of a man's temper is, frequently, like riding, not a colt, but lightning. And yet, after he

has trained it, and broken it, by determined efforts of his will, by prayer, and by simple, faithful looking to God, he finds that he can maintain his equanimity in perfect ease in circumstances in which at first he could not have done it without a hard struggle. Thus the yoke becomes easy, and the burden light. In proportion as you bear the cross, you conquer that for which you bear it.



LITTLE BALLARD'S PRAYING AND RESIGNATION.

"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." COLLOSSIANS IV, 2.

A LITTLE boy by the name of Ballard lived in Trenton, New Jersey. He was converted at the age of eight, and never afterward let a day pass without prayer to his Heavenly Father in secret. During the military excitement of 1861 he became intensely anxious to possess a drum. He did not want a toy, but a large one, similar to those used in the regular service.

But he had no money, and his father, if willing, had not the means to apply to such a purpose. What should he do! His eldest sister Hattie, to whom he is accustomed to reveal all his plans and troubles, was applied to. He earnestly requested her to suggest some way by which he could obtain his heart's desire.

She thought a little, and then said, "Mr. W., round in S. street, is a gentleman of wealth, and much interested in military matters; perhaps, if you were to go to him and state your case, he might be induced to give you a drum."

The suggestion pleased him, and he immediately asked his sister to comb his hair and arrange his clothing, and he would set out upon his mission at once. While the preparations were going on, Ballard seemed to be engaged in deep thought. Suddenly, and with great earnestness, he said:

"Hattie, will it be begging?" "It will be very much

like it," she replied. "Well, then," said Ballard, "I won't go." So Hattie's project fell to the ground at once.

After a little further thought Ballard exclaimed: "O, Hattie, I'll tell you what I will do. Mr. B., who is a member of our Church, has all kinds of drums to sell; I'll go and tell him if he will let me have one on trust, as soon as I get big enough to work I will earn the money and pay him for it." This plan seemed plausible, and he became intensely interested, and anxious to carry it out at once. His sister finally told him she feared Mr. B. would be unwilling to wait so long for his money, and she thought he had better give up that idea too. Again he was troubled and said, "What shall I do? how shall I get a drum?"

After some time he asked with much earnestness, "O, Hattie, shall I pray for one?" His sister replied, "Do just as you think best. If you would like to pray about it I see no objections to your doing so." At last he jumped up and said, "Yes, I will go and pray about it, and if the Lord wants me to have one, he can make somebody think about it, and they will send it to me; and if I do not get one in answer to my prayer, then it will not be right for me to fret or worry any more about it."

After speaking thus he went to his room and remained about fifteen minutes. He came back and seemed perfectly satisfied. He said he had told the Lord all about it. "Yes, Hattie, I told the Lord how high and how large round I wanted it; what colors I would like to have; and I told him the name of a little boy down town who has one just like I want; and now," said he, "I am going to give it all up to the Lord."

He continued to pray thus three times a day for about three weeks. He then came to his sister, and said very seriously, "Hattie, I guess I won't pray any more about the drum." "Why not?" she asked. "Well," said he, "I don't think the Lord wants me to have one; I have been praying three weeks, and he do n't send me any, and I do n't think I'll pray about it any more, *for it seems so much*

like worrying mother for something she do n't want me to have." He then gave the matter up entirely.

The fact of Ballard's having prayed for a drum reached the ears of a friend weeks after he had ceased his importunities, and he was moved at once to do something for the little fellow. He bought a drum, marked it, and gave orders where to forward.

When it was taken to Ballard's house on "New-Year's day" he was out with his sister. His mother received it, and set it carefully away under the counter of the little trimmings store kept by his sisters. When he came home his sister Hattie, who knew all about it, told him to fold up his things and lay them nicely away under the counter.

In doing this he touched the sticks, which were lying on the top of the drum, and, as they fell to the floor, arrested his attention.

"What is this?" he exclaimed in great surprise; and then discovering the object for which he had so long prayed, sat down by its side so completely overcome with emotion that for some five minutes he could not speak a word. Then, with the drum in his hands, he sprang out into the middle of the floor, his eyes swimming in tears, and under the influence of great excitement, he could only exclaim, "O mother, mother!" After he had calmed down a little he said, "Well, it is just like Him."

"Just like who?" said Hattie.

"Just like the Lord," said Ballard. Then turning it all round, and looking at it over and over, he said, with such seriousness and solemnity that affected his sisters to tears, "*It looks just like God.*"

After a while he said, "Hattie, who gave it to me?"

"Why," replied Hattie, "I thought you said it was just like God; did n't you mean that God gave it to you?"

"Yes," he replied, "but then God would n't come and give it to me himself; I mean whose heart did he put it in to give it to me?"

"Who do you think?" said Hattie.

"Why, it seems just like brother ——," said Ballard.

"You are right," said she; "he proposed it, and one or two others helped him in the purchase."

"Well," said Ballard, very seriously, "it is just like him; yes, it is just like him." Then placing his two front fingers about two inches apart, he said, "It is about this much higher and larger round than I prayed for, but it is just like what I wanted, though I was afraid to pray for *one quite so large as this.*"

Fixing the drum in a proper position, he experimented upon it with great satisfaction. After a little his sister Hattie left the room and went up stairs; Ballard unhooked the drum from his little coat, set it carefully away, and followed her. While she was attending to her duties about the room, he sat very seriously with his head leaning upon his hand.

When she had got through he said, "Well, I suppose you are waiting." "Waiting for what?" said Hattie. "Waiting for me to thank Him," said Ballard. "Yes, if you would like to," said Hattie. He then asked his sister to kneel with him, and they both bowed down by the bedside, while Ballard poured out his soul in silent gratitude to God.

Next day, while talking to his mother about the drum, he said, "It is all right; but I prayed for it last July; I wonder why the Lord did not answer my prayer before?"

After thinking about the matter a little more he said, "O, mother, I think I know the reason now. The Lord knew that brother Frank and sister Adell, with the baby, were coming home this Fall to stay a good while, and if I had the drum then I would be drumming round, making a noise, and keeping the baby awake, so he thought he would not let me have it till they went home. *Well,*" said he, "*the Lord knows just how to do every thing, don't he, mother?*"

How beautiful is a child's faith! No wonder Jesus said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven;" and the moral

likeness required, refers largely, no doubt, to the *unreasoning faith of childhood*.

In view of the foregoing illustration and Scripture statement, may we not say :

"Lord, give us such a faith as this,
And then whate'er may come,
We 'll taste e'en here the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home."



THE PERPETUAL WAR.

"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." GALATIANS V, 17.

WHILE we sail down the world's stream, we may glide pleasantly along, and need neither the canvas nor the oar; but the moment we attempt to stem it, the struggle and the conflict begin: we must either earnestly contend or be carried down to ruin. What is it that produces thunder? It is the meeting of contraries, or fire and water. What is it that produces the earthquake? It is a similar cause—the meeting of contraries, or substances which can not quietly coexist. What is it that occasions war, and massacre, and devastation? It is still a similar cause. It is passion in collision with passion. It is the tyrant seeking to oppress the free. It is ambition grasping at more and more, and trampling upon all who oppose its pleasure—and the same law obtains in religion. Why are God's people often of all men the most miserable? Whence come persecutions? They come because holiness in the godly and sin in the world have come in collision. The will of God is opposing or protesting against the passions of men, and on that account there is war on the one hand, produced by inflamed passion on the other.

A Church, a flock, for farther example, has long been afflicted with an unconverted ministry, and all is peaceful there, for all is spiritual death. But there comes a change.

A converted ministry is raised up, and now begins the collision between spiritual life and spiritual death. Ere the truth gets access to the heart, it must fight every inch of the way.

Or there is a family where, up to a certain period, all is unmitigated worldliness; not one soul is there alive to God. But in his sovereign time one member is converted, and then perhaps begin the collision and the strife. The world resents the intrusion or the rebuke implied in spiritual decision; and if that heart will love God's pure truth, it must zealously contend.

Or there is an individual soul. It has long slumbered, as the world does, without God and without hope. No compunction has roused it, and no alarm been felt. But something at last occurs to disturb that false peace. Truth enters the conscience. It operates there like a visit from the living to the catacombs of Egypt, when the night-birds are disturbed in crowds, and threaten, by their multitudinous flutterings, to blind or destroy the intruder. Thus, if truth will take possession of a heart for God, it must encounter and vanquish a thousand enemies. In that conflict man needs the whole armor of God, for he has to fight the good fight of faith. His enemies may be those of his own household, or even his own heart; and nothing but the free Spirit of the living God can make man sure of victory in that contest.



WE CAN NOT STAND ALONE.

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." ECCLESIASTES IV, 9, 10.

IN the disastrous campaign of Napoleon, when he retreated from Moscow, and his soldiers, one after another, fell dead in the ranks, the only way of preserving life was, as one fell, for the others to press together, and fill the

place of their fallen companions ; and thus fewer lives were sacrificed and a remnant escaped. It is so in the toils and struggles of the Christian host. God has united them in an organic body. They are an army of Christian warriors called to fight the good fight of faith, to battle for God, the kingdom of Christ, and the welfare of human society. For this they are divinely placed as lights in the world—bulwarks of righteousness, witnesses for God, watchmen, soldiers, defenders of the faith. They can not stand alone. Aggregation, and not isolation, is the Divine law for human society and aggressive Christian action.



A KIND TONE IN THE PREACHER.

"Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." PROVERBS XVI, 24.

A RIGHT act may be done in a wrong spirit. The spirit in which men say and do things is, in fact, one of the great powers of life in the promotion of good or ill. A good act done in a bad spirit might often better not have been done. A sermon preached in the spirit of the scold had, we believe, generally, better have remained unpreached. There are those who pique themselves on what they call "whipping the Church into the harness," and all this under the shield of that great truth in the work of revivals, that the Church must first be set right. Nor is it to be denied that some successful revivalists are greatly given to a censorious, denunciating, dogmatical, harsh, and acid mode of presenting the truth.

But we are not speaking of a style of preaching that does *no* good, but of one which always fails seriously of doing the *greatest* good. In all revivals the spirit of the preacher is pre-eminently catching, and if he be given to censoriousness, denunciation, and a right-angled—sometimes acute—spirit, this same spirit will take possession of the Church and the young converts. And when the rains come

and the winds blow upon such a moral structure, if it do not always fall, we have always noticed a great falling away. Every zealous member and young convert must needs be as urgent, extreme, and peremptory in his demands upon a brother, or the sinner he would reform, as was his late spiritual model. But, in such cases, resistance follows, feelings are hurt, heart-burnings occur, and the further consequences need not be detailed.

The law of kindness may be violated in the *tones of the voice*. There is no power in nature more mysterious, none that operates with greater certainty, than that of the innumerable intonations of which the human voice is capable. In a tone, grief becomes irresistibly eloquent, hate suggests the deadly poison of the dreaded basilisk, love unmans, and beauty transports. It is not the *words* of the mother, for many long months, that make her babe feel that the heart of love is its cradle, and the lessons of discipline its lot. "Not so much what my mother said to me, as the *way* she said it," was once remarked to the writer by a despairing young man, who had sadly strayed from the precepts of the parental roof. "O," said he, as the great tears coursed down his cheeks, "the *way* my mother said that last thing to me! The tones of her voice murmur this moment in my ear!" Is there, then, no moral power in the tone of a word? As well deny to music its charms, to the rose its odor, to the sky its beauty. Says Whitefield, "I carefully sought out those acceptable tones that won like a spell upon the heart, even when the words were unremembered." So wonderfully modulated was Whitefield's voice, that Garrick said, "he could make men either laugh or cry, by pronouncing the word Mesopotamia."

"His words, they had so sweet a flow,
And spoke the truth so richly well,
They fell like heaven's serenest snow,
And all was brightness where they fell."

The power which appropriate intonations have upon our own moral emotions, and the influence, again, which these

moral emotions have to produce thought, should suggest a valuable lesson to every Christian minister. The man who is always talking gruffly, and in harsh tones, may think strongly, but he will think roughly. Like the picture of the artist, which becomes more accurate and mellowed by age, so the sound of one's own voice is an imperceptible educator of his taste. Much of the harshness of tone of which we are now speaking, and which vacillates between the scold and hoarseness, undoubtedly arises from that common fault of the pulpit of pitching the voice at once on one key, and keeping it there, only with increased or diminished percussion, through an entire discourse. The preacher who corrects this fault does vastly more than to achieve an important intellectual victory. He increases mightily his power of persuasiveness. He studies the elocution of moral emotions. He learns to speak *kindly* in public. There might have been the absence of all unkindness before. But now there is the presence of that potent charm. We appeal to the experience of brethren. How often have we regretted, even while preaching, that our voice was so little in harmony with what we really felt and desired to teach! "Ma," said the little girl to her mother, on returning from Church, "I like our preacher when he comes to see us, but I do n't like to hear him preach." On being asked why, the response was, "His preaching sounded like scolding all the time."

DEATH-BED REPENTANCES.

"Now is the accepted time." 2 CORINTHIANS VI, 2.

To give up the world when we can no longer use it—to mourn over passions that we can no longer indulge—to express sorrow for sins when just going to the tribunal where we must meet them all, would seem, on the face of the statement, to be fatal to our sincerity; and then to build up hopes upon such repentances, in the great majority of cases, is like building a house upon vapors

which vanish before the sunlight, or upon the ice which dissolves before the first breath of Summer. In my whole ministerial experience of twenty-five years, I remember but one case of severe sickness, which was supposed to be unto death, that resulted in true repentance, and in a new life on recovery.

There was a gay, dashing young man under my early ministry, the son of pious parents, who had passed into the skies, leaving him in early life, to be cared for by others who did not neglect him. He was taken sick, and of a lingering disease, which seemed steadily pursuing its fatal purpose. I soon became a visitor, and then a daily attendant upon him. His sins came up in order before him, and he was intensely anxious about his salvation. Nothing for many days could soothe his disturbed feelings. I sat by his side, resolved, as far as possible, to remove every doubt and every objection from the Bible, which I held open in my hand. He urged his great sinfulness. I pointed to Manasseh, David, Paul, who found mercy; and told him of John Bunyan, and of many cases which passed under my own observation. He feared that Christ would not receive him. I told him of the errand of Christ to seek and to save the lost; I taught him as to the way in which the salvation of sinners added to the declarative glory of the Savior. When all objections were removed, and when his fears were thus quelled, I placed the plan of salvation in its simplicity and efficacy before him, and urged his acceptance of it; and before I closed my Bible, he said, "Well, I never saw things before in this light; I think I can thus receive and rest upon Christ for salvation." I prayed with him, and retired.

At my next visit he was rejoicing in Christ, and in the most familiar manner narrating his new feelings to his friends. The disease steadily progressed till I expected daily to hear of his death, but there seemed not a waver in his feelings of confidence in Christ. His spiritual joy increased with his feebleness, till he longed to depart and be with Christ.

His feelings, at times, rose up into the region of rapture. He selected his funeral text and hymn, and talked freely and peaceably about his departure; and although my confidence in such conversions was always weak, yet I felt that this was a genuine case, and so spoke of it to many.

To the amazement of all, a change, as if by miracle, took place in his disease, and he commenced slowly to recover. My visits became less frequent, and with returning health there came a dryness of conversation on religious subjects. At each visit I could mark a declension, till finally there was a reluctance to hear any thing personal on the subject. When I saw him for the first time, weak and wan, in the street, and tottering on the top of a stick, I approached to congratulate him on his getting out again; but, observing me, he turned into an alley. Often did he send for me when sick, but now, when recovering, he avoided me. He soon regained his usual strength, and returned to his ordinary pursuits, and, as if for the purpose of erasing all impressions of his sick-bed repentings, he went to every excess of riot. Before his sickness he was wild, now he was wicked; before, he was a decent rowdy, now he was a drunken rake; before, he was full of noisy nonsense, now you could hear his boisterous profanity all over the street. He openly scoffed at God, at the Bible, at religion in all its forms; and whenever he saw me approaching him in the street, he always crossed to the opposite side, ashamed to meet one who had so often bowed with him in prayer while apparently on the crumbling verge of eternity, and to whom he so often expressed spiritual hopes and joys, which, in the belief of their sincerity, caused me to thank God and take courage.

No case of repentance on the borders of the grave ever inspired me with greater confidence, and in no case of backsliding were my hopes so utterly dashed. Many years have passed away since I saw this young man. Whether he has gone—whether living or dead—I know not; but

when I last saw him, he was as far from the kingdom of heaven as any person I ever knew. And yet, had he died of that fearful sickness, I would have held him up as an instance of true conversion on a dying bed. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

From very many similar instances I select another: Mr. B—— was an active, skillful mechanic, of bright mind, ready wit, and free, social habits. But he was profane, given to drink, skeptical, and neglectful of all religious ordinances. I often sought to make some serious impression in some way upon him, but I was only beating the air. He fell into a slow consumption; and while he could go about, my visits to him in sickness were like those in health, apparently in vain. When his lungs were almost gone, and on a very warm day in Summer, when the air was motionless, and filled with vapor, and when even those in perfect health felt oppressed, he sent for me. I found him gasping for breath, and apparently dying. He, in broken accents, confessed his great sins, and implored forgiveness of God. I told him of Christ, and of the freeness of his salvation to all who repented and believed. "O," said he, "I repent and believe with all my heart." I told him that all God required was the heart, and that when we believed with the heart the justifying righteousness of Christ was ours. "I believe with all my heart," was his energetic reply. I prayed with him, and retired deeply pondering the event.

I called next day, and found him considerably relieved, but yet breathing with difficulty. I made kind inquiries as to his symptoms. "O," said he, "there is nothing the matter with me but these d—d lungs," at the same time striking his breast with great violence; "they are getting better, and I hope to be soon out again." I was shocked at his profanity. I sought to recall the feelings and confessions of the previous day, but, inspired by his temporary relief with the hope of recovery, it was all in vain.

The heart, which, in the presence of death, had melted as wax before the fire, had resumed its accustomed icy hardness and coldness. Fear had inspired his feelings; and when fear subsided, his feelings passed away like foam upon the troubled waters.

But soon Death came again, and with a determination not to be driven from his prey. I was again summoned in a great hurry to his dying bed. He was in the last struggle. The big, cold sweat came gushing from all his pores. He strove to speak, but in vain. He looked on me imploringly, and with a keen earnestness which made impressions now as fresh as when made, though years have passed away. I held up Christ to him, dwelling upon the text, "Look unto me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved." I told him that, though he could not speak nor turn, yet he could look—that it was only to "look and live." He understood all—he assented to all. And he died, leaving on my heart the deep impression that all his religious feelings were induced by the fear of death, and that if he had recovered, his confessions and prayers would have been subjects of mirth while occupying a seat among the scorers, and among the fools that hate knowledge.

The thief on the cross repented, and was pardoned in the last hour of his life, but we do not know that he ever had previously a call to repentance. Had he been frequently called, and had he frequently refused to attend, we have no reason to conclude that he would have been called again. The most hopeless of men are those who have most frequently quenched the Spirit, and who have most frequently turned a deaf ear to the calls of mercy. Iron is converted into steel by being frequently hardened and suddenly cooled; and thus the heart of steel is made. The thief on the cross is the only instance of true repentance at the close of life in the Bible, and that is placed on record to forbid presumption and despair. If but one such case is on record, who should presume? If one is on record, who need despair?—*Rev. N. Murray, D. D.*

THE FAITHFUL BIBLE READER.

"He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." PROVERBS x, 9.

"WHEN I was a young man," said a gentleman, now a minister, "I was a clerk in Boston. Two of my room-mates at my boarding-house were also clerks, about my own age, which was eighteen. The first Sunday morning, during the three or four long hours that elapsed from getting up to the bell-ringing for Church, I felt a secret desire to get a Bible, which my mother had given me, out of my trunk, and read in it; for I had been so brought up by my parents as to regard it as a duty at home to read a chapter or two in the Bible every Sunday. I was now very anxious to get my Bible and read, but I was afraid to do so before my room-mates, who were reading some miscellaneous books. At length my conscience got the mastery, and I rose up and went to my trunk. I had half raised it, when the thought occurred to me that it might look like over-sanctity, and appear Pharisaical—so I shut my trunk, and returned to the window. For twenty minutes I was miserably ill at ease: I felt I was doing wrong. I started a second time for my trunk, and had my hand upon the little Bible, when the fear of being laughed at conquered the better emotion, and I again dropped the top of my trunk. As I turned away from it, one of my room-mates, who observed my irresolute movements, said, laughingly,

"'I——, what's the matter? you seem as restless as a weathercock.'

"I replied, by laughing in my turn; and then, conceiving the truth to be the best, frankly told them both what was the matter.

"To my surprise and delight, they both spoke, and averred that they had Bibles in their trunks, and had been secretly wishing to read in them, but were afraid to take them out, lest I should laugh at them.

"'Then,' said I, 'let us agree to read them every Sunday, and we shall have the laugh all on one side.'

"To this there was a hearty response, and the next moment the three Bibles were out; and I assure you we felt happier all that day for reading them that morning.

"The following Sunday, about ten o'clock, while we were each reading our chapters, two of our fellow-boarders from another room came in. When they saw how we were engaged, they stared, and then exclaimed:

"'Bless us! what is all this? A conventicle?'

"In reply, I, smiling, related to them exactly how the matter stood: my struggle to get my Bible from my trunk; and how we three, having found we had all been afraid of each other without cause, had now agreed to read every Sunday.

"'Not a bad idea,' answered one of them. 'You have more courage than I have. I have a Bible, too, but have not looked into it since I have been in Boston! but I'll read it after this, since you've broken the ice.'

"The other then asked one of us to read aloud, and both sat and quietly listened till the bell rang for Church.

"That evening we three, in the same room, agreed to have a chapter read every night, by one or other of us, at nine o'clock—and we religiously adhered to our purpose. A few evenings after this resolution, four or five of the boarders—for there were sixteen clerks boarding in the house—happened to be in our room talking when the nine o'clock bell rang. One of my room-mates, looking at me, opened the Bible. The others looking inquiringly, I then explained our custom.

"'We'll all stay and listen,' they said, almost unanimously.

"The result was that, without exception, every one of the sixteen clerks spent his Sabbath morning in reading the Bible; and the moral effect upon our household was of the highest character. I relate this incident," concluded the clergyman, "to show what influence one person, even a youth, may exert for evil or good. No man should ever be afraid to do his duty. A hundred hearts may throb to act

right, that only await a leader. I forgot to add that we were all called the 'Bible Clerks!' All these youths are now useful and Christian men, and more than one is laboring in the ministry."

Real independence of character is an important safeguard against temptation; and though it is not natural to us, yet we may cultivate it, till a shower of taunts and jeers shall assail us in vain; and till scoffers themselves shall be tired of the sport, or even, following the dictates of their better judgment, shall become our allies in the very work from which they would once have diverted us.

THE DETECTION OF SIN CERTAIN.

"Be sure your sin will find you out." NUMBERS XXXII, 23.

IN the most mysterious manner does the providence of God sometimes expose crime. A train of events which no human being could have set in operation leads to the most startling developments, and criminals who have eluded the pursuit and even the observation and suspicion of a most vigilant police, are discovered and punished, after all hope of detection had died out. The most trifling circumstances will be connected with a series of events which develop and bring to light deeds which have for years been buried from all human scrutiny. The singular movements of some domestic animals; the words written upon the wadding of some discharged gun; the caving in of banks, in the sand of which dead bodies have been buried, and other things as trivial, lead to the detection of men who suppose they have concealed all tokens of guilt in the graves of their victims. And this providence will assist in the detection of all other criminals of smaller or greater guilt. God is pledged against sin; he abhors crime, and is resolutely determined to punish all who commit it. His providence, like a key, will unlock the secrets of darkness, and, like a skillful hand, will unravel the thread of life, and expose, when

least we expect it, its follies and crimes. Nor can the sinner control these mysterious workings of the Divine Mind and purpose. What we may deem best calculated to hide, conceal, and cover up our sins, may be the very thing which shall expose our faults, and bring shame and disgrace. Letters written and disguised; remarks made to direct attention to another quarter; weapons thrown into the bushes by the wayside; all, instead of proving innocence, become proofs of guilt, and are used for a purpose the reverse of which was intended. It is related of an eminent clergyman, that on one occasion, while walking in a graveyard, he saw the sexton throwing up the bones of a human being. He took the skull in his hands, and, on examination, saw a nail sticking into the temple. He drew it out, placed it in his pocket, and asked the sexton whose skull it was. On receiving the necessary information he went to the house of the widow, and entered into conversation with her. He asked her of what disease her husband died, and while she was giving an answer drew the nail from his vest, and asked her if she ever saw it before. Struck with horror at the unexpected question, the wretched woman confessed that she murdered her husband; that her own hand had driven the nail into his temple.



DIFFICULTY AND EFFORT.

"Endure hardness as a good soldier." 2 TIMOTHY II, 3.

It is not ease, but effort; not facility, but difficulty, that makes men. There is, perhaps, no position in life in which difficulties have not been encountered and overcome before any decided measure of success can be achieved; those difficulties are, however, our best instructors, as our mistakes often form our best experience. We learn wisdom from failure, more than from our success; we often discover what *will* do by finding out what will not do; and he who never made a mistake never made a discovery.

Horne Tooke used to say of his studies in intellectual philosophy, that he had become all the better acquainted with the country through having the good luck sometimes to lose his way. And a distinguished investigator in physical science has left it on record, that whenever, in the course of his researches, he encountered an apparently-insuperable obstacle, he generally found himself on the brink of some novel discovery. The very greatest things—great thoughts, discoveries, inventions—have generally been nurtured in hardship, often pondered over in sorrow, and at length established with difficulty.

Beethoven said of Rossini, that he had in him the stuff to have made a good musician, if he had only, when a boy, been well flogged; but that he had been spoiled by the facility with which he produced. Men who feel their strength within them need not fear to encounter adverse opinions; they have far greater reason to fear undue praise and too friendly criticism. When Mendelssohn was about to enter the orchestra at Birmingham, on his first performance of his "Elijah," he said laughingly to one of his friends and critics, "Stick your claws into me. Don't tell me what you like, but what you do n't like!"

It has been said, and truly, that it is the defeat that tries the general more than the victory. Washington lost far more battles than he gained; but he succeeded in the end. The Romans, in their most victorious campaigns, almost invariably began with defeats. More used to be compared, by his companions, to a drum, which nobody hears of except it be beaten. Wellington's military genius was perfected by encounters with difficulties of apparently the most overwhelming character, but which only served to nerve his resolution, and bring out more prominently his great qualities as a man and a general. The skillful mariner obtains his best experience amidst storms, which train him to self-reliance, courage, and the highest discipline.

And he, let me add, is the true Christian minister or professor who sails the sea of life not "with an infinite depth

of Summer blue sky" forever above him, but who is called upon to reef sails and drive under bare poles; who has nights without stars, heavens thick with tempests, and troubles like an army often bearing down upon him.—*Dr. Samuel Smiles.*

THE EARTH-BORN GIANT.

"For in Him we live, move, and have our being." ACTS xvii, 28.

THERE is an old story of mythology about a giant named Antæus, who was born by the earth. In order to keep alive, this giant was obliged to touch the earth as often as once in five minutes, and every time he thus came in contact with the earth he became twice as strong as before.

The Christian resembles Antæus. In order to become and continue a truly-living Christian, the disciple of Christ must often approach his Father by prayer. Every time he thus approaches him who hears and answers prayer, he becomes stronger and more able to resist the wiles and assaults of the adversary. On the contrary, should he neglect to obtain supplies of the living water from the everlasting fountain, he will soon become faint, slide back, and finally lapse into the melancholy and mortifying state of a dead Christian.

It is as foolish and presumptuous for a Christian to commence the day without prayer, as it would be for an engineer to run his locomotive without replenishing his supply of water. Disastrous consequences will certainly follow.

THE USES OF TROUBLE.

"As many as I love I chasten." REVELATION iii, 19.

THERE is a little plant, small and stunted, growing under the shade of a broad-spreading oak; and this little plant values the shade which covers it, and greatly does it esteem

the quiet rest which its noble friend affords. But a blessing is designed for this little plant.

Once upon a time there comes along the woodman, and with his sharp ax he fells the oak. The plant weeps, and cries, "My shelter is departed; every rough wind will blow upon me, and every storm will seek to uproot me!"

"No, no," saith the angel of that flower; "now will the sun get at thee; now will the shower fall on thee in more copious abundance than before; now thy stunted form shall spring up into loveliness, and thy flower, which could never have expanded itself to perfection, shall now laugh in the sunshine, and men shall say, 'How greatly hath that plant increased! how glorious hath become its beauty, through the removal of that which was its shade and its delight!'"

See you not, then, that God may take away your comforts and your privileges, to make you the better Christians? Why, the Lord always trains his soldiers, not by letting them lie on feather-beds, but by turning them out, and using them to forced marches and hard service. He makes them ford through streams, and swim through rivers, and climb mountains, and walk many a long march with heavy knapsacks of sorrow on their backs. This is the way in which he makes them soldiers—not by dressing them up in fine uniforms, to swagger at the barrack gates, and to be fine gentlemen in the eyes of the loungers in the park. God knows that soldiers are only to be made in battle; they are not to be grown in peaceful times. We may grow the stuff of which soldiers are made; but warriors are really educated by the smell of powder, in the midst of whizzing bullets and roaring cannonades, not in soft and peaceful times. Well, Christian, may not this account for it all? Is not thy Lord bringing out thy graces and making them grow? Is he not developing in you the qualities of the soldier by throwing you into the heat of battle? and should you not use every appliance to come off conqueror?—*Spurgeon.*

TO ANXIOUS SEEKERS.

"They sought him with their whole desire, and he was found of them; and the Lord gave them rest." 2 CHRONICLES XV, 15.

DURING a revival held some years since in the city of Glasgow, it was customary to hold meetings every night for prayer and conversation with inquirers after peace. One evening, a Sunday school teacher came to make known her case. She had been in distress for three weeks. In her trouble she had tried to find relief by change of air and scenery, but soon discovered that this was no medicine for a soul diseased; and, coming back, she shut herself up in a room to plead for mercy. Her besetting temptation was a fear lest any one should discover her in the act of prayer; but after shutting herself up to pray in silence, her feelings became so excited, that she literally screamed in agony, and her prayer was heard in every part of the house. At length she turned to Jesus, and poured out her soul in the following pathetic strain: "O Jesus, I am told thou art the burden-bearer: here is my burden; here I lay it; I will not lift it; I will have nothing more to do with it: do with it what thou wilt." From that hour she rejoiced in Christ her Savior. Penitent, follow in her footsteps. Go to the feet of Jesus. Cast your burden on the Lord.

"Yes, I yield, I yield at last,
Listen to thy speaking blood:
Me, with all my sins, I cast
On my atoning God."

A girl who heard this story told at the meeting, went home determined to imitate it. "I used the same words," said she afterward; "but the burden would not go off. I had to lie where I was with the burden still upon me. I remembered I had kept in my heart an idol. At last I tore it out, and said, 'Lord, there is my idol;' and then he took my burden away." How many seekers of salvation are kept in bondage, year after year, by the same thing!—

“some idol which they will not own; some secret bosom sin.” Whatever it be, it must be given up at once and forever. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Say, then, as you draw near,

“Though late, I all forsake,
My friends, my all resign;
Gracious Redeemer, take, O take,
And seal me ever thine!”

At another meeting, where any one who could say a word for Christ had full occupation among the multitude of anxious souls, one little girl, who had found peace to her own soul, was heard thus counseling another, who was still in darkness: “I say, lassie, do as I did: grip a promise, an’ haud till ’t”—and hold on to it. My penitent friend, is not this faith?—taking some precious word of promise, holding it up, as it were, to the view of the Eternal, and saying, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me!” Try it.

“Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,
And looks to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries, ‘It shall be done!’”



THE BEAUTIFUL VIRGIN.

“Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”
PROVERBS VII, 27.

WHEN the Inquisition house, at Madrid, was destroyed by order of Napoleon, the commanding officer found an image of a beautiful virgin. The workmanship was most perfect, its proportions were correct, and beauty rested on each chiseled feature. This image was an instrument of torture. The victim was commanded to go up and embrace the virgin, and as he placed his bosom against the cold bosom of the statue, and his lips against the cold lips of the marble, a spring was touched, an internal machine was set in motion, and the arms of the virgin, filled with sharp daggers, arose and encircled the poor sufferer, and cutting into his

flesh, mangled him in a most horrid manner, and destroyed his life. Vice is such an image. It looks well at a distance, but it is armed with knives which will cut, not only the body, but the soul. Fly from the tempter's house, as from the door of death. Fly from the tempter himself. He will strive to ruin thee. Poison is in his heart, and falsehood on his tongue. He seeks thy ruin.

"Beware of yonder dog;
Look, when he fawns, he bites; and when he bites,
His venom teeth will rankle to the death;
Have not to do with him, beware of him,
Sin, death, and hell, have set their marks on him,
And all their ministers attend him."

EACH AT HIS POST.

"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." 2 TIMOTHY II, 3.

THE last thrilling watchword of Britain's great admiral, "England expects every man to do his duty," will be remembered as long as her language is spoken, or the spirit of patriotism glows in her children's hearts. And what did these words, so simply sublime, imply? That each individual in that crowded fleet should feel as if the eyes of his country were fixed upon himself—as if her honor was committed to *his* keeping. That each should discharge his own duty, maintain his own allotted post, and there toil or endure, with patient devotedness, not seeking to leave it for any other, till the word of command was given. And that "every man," the humblest as well as the highest, should realize his responsibility, his privilege, his personal share, as one of England's sons, in the disgrace or honor attending defeat or victory.

A similar spirit ought to animate "every man" who professes or desires to be "a good soldier of Jesus Christ." From the time of Eve to the present day there is no temptation which the great enemy has more frequently and successfully tried with men, than that of awaking a spirit of

dissatisfaction with their individual lot—a feeling that some other position than the present would be better, more suitable, more useful. Who has not felt as if in some other sphere than his own he could better glorify God and serve his generation; as if other duties could be far better discharged, other trials more easily and profitably borne—almost as if the Divine Master had made something like a mistake in the tasks and situation he had assigned to his servant? Such feelings may indeed have been resisted and overcome by the power of grace, and from the heart the believer may now be able to say, “Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word;” but we believe that most thoughtful souls, accustomed to look within, will confess to some experience of them.

The peace of God will never “keep our hearts and minds” till we have been enabled to realize that the will of our Father in heaven must ever be *the best* for us, and taught to accept our peculiar position, with its duties and trials, as appointed for us individually by the love and wisdom which can not err. Then, keeping fast hold of this great principle, we can go on in strength not our own, to obey the command, “Occupy till I come.” Nor is it inconsistent with Christian humility, to cherish a high idea of the importance of the work given us to do—an animating hope of what the Master may permit the servant to accomplish for his glory. And thus the most lowly work becomes cheered and hallowed. For who can tell how much He who sees the end from the beginning may have made to depend upon the fidelity of the most humble laborers in his vineyard? To what slight and poor beginnings may not the greatest results be often traced back, even by our own imperfect knowledge? Angels, knowing and *trusting* more fully, may watch with deepest interest events and actions which man considers beneath his notice.

During the long siege of Mexico, under Fernando Cortez, it is related that he wished at a critical period to make one great effort to take the city by assault. An impetuous

attack was made by the Spaniards, which nothing seemed able to resist. Barrier after barrier gave way, one obstacle after another was surmounted, and at length the city itself entered. But Cortez, ever cautious, and aware of the necessity of securing to themselves the power of a safe retreat, if needful, committed to one of his bravest captains the duty of remaining in the rear, and filling up the breaches made by the advancing troops, especially repairing those in the bridges and causeway, which formed the safest approach through the waters by which the city was surrounded. The task appeared hard, unnecessary, inglorious—the officer's spirit could not brook to be thus employed—almost in the work of a field laborer, while the shouts of battle and victory were calling him to share the dangers and glory of his companions in arms. He abandoned his charge, and, with his men, rushing forward, mingled in the scene of active warfare.

The watchful Mexican general quickly perceived this error and took fatal advantage of it. He ordered his foremost troops to appear to give way, and thus encourage the Spaniards to advance farther, while he dispatched a chosen body through private streets toward the great breach left unguarded. Then, at a given signal, the Spaniards were again assailed in front with such tremendous fury that Cortez ordered a retreat. At first they retired leisurely and securely, believing their way was open; but as they became more hardly pressed, and more impatient to escape, haste and confusion succeeded to order, and on reaching the great gap in the causeway, horsemen and infantry plunged in terror into the waters, while their cruel enemies, in light canoes, rushed upon them from every side. A dreadful defeat followed. Cortez himself was saved with difficulty; and for those who gained the Spanish camp in safety at last, the gloom of that terrible night was only lighted up by the fires of triumph from the city, and its silence broken by hearing the groans and shrieks of their tortured countrymen who were left prisoners behind. Such was the

consequence of one man's failure in a duty, the importance of which he misunderstood and despised. May not similar instances occur more often than we think of, in connection with the great spiritual work and warfare ever going on around us?

How different the conduct of the Roman sentinel, whose skeleton, found after the lapse of long ages in the buried city, from which other inhabitants had been able to escape, tells with silent eloquence of faithfulness unto death!



FLIGHT OF THE PIGEONS.

"As the doves to their windows." ISAIAH LX, 8.

WHY did not the inspired writer make his record thus: As doves *from* their windows? For the best reason in the world: because it would have been entirely inappropriate.

Have you ever observed the difference between the manner in which doves, or pigeons, *go out* from their cotes, or houses, and that in which they *come back* to them? If not, it is strange; for the fact is so common and so impressive.

Often have we watched them, with rich enjoyment of the comparison cited above.

See the pigeons, as familiarly placed among us, coming out at the gable end of a barn, where their boxes open; sunning themselves awhile at each door; mounting, one by one, to the ridge or the barn, or eaves, or roof-side; bowing and cooing, and multiplying all manner of gallantries and gayeties; and again, one by one, or, perhaps, two or three at a time, flapping away for a fine flight somewhere, not seeming to care in what direction or for what purpose, unless it may be a little brisk and pleasant exercise. Before long, all are gone, and the barn is still as death. But wait awhile. Listen! And now, hark to the rush and roar! What's the matter? Nothing but this: The stragglers all came together in some distant part of their course, as if by concert, and, to complete their sport, determined upon a

fair start and intense race for their homestead, to see which should reach it first; and, behold, how they come! cloud-like, whirlwind-like, all at once, darkening boxes and roof, lighting on one another, tumbling over and righting themselves, fluttering up again, hovering, settling, recovering breath, turning round and round, dressing their plumes, cooing and rejoicing, and resting—the whole flock visible at once in its happiest estate.

That's the way for converts to come into the kingdom of God; not singly, and slowly, but swiftly, and in multitude, a nation at once, triumphantly and gloriously—"AS DOVES TO THEIR WINDOWS!"—*T. H. Stockton.*

THE TANK AND THE WELL.

"For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." JEREMIAH II, 13.

THERE was once a farmer, in India where the rain falls only at a certain season of the year, who had a large piece of ground to cultivate. His living depended upon the field. If it produced plentifully, he had bread enough and to spare; if it was barren, nothing but death by famine stared him in the face. He had, therefore, the strongest possible interest in seeing the land well cared for; and as the soil was rich and the climate bountiful, there seemed no reason to doubt that he would have as large a return from it as he desired. But a great deal—we may say *all*—depended on the field being properly watered; and to see to that specially was his business. Well, there were two quarters from which, at first sight, water might be expected. In one part of the field was a cistern, which either he himself or his father had erected to preserve some of the rain when it fell in the rainy season; but this tank had somehow been badly constructed; it leaked, and, do what the poor farmer could, it could not be made water-tight. The consequence was, as he had

learned by experience again and again, it was always found to be empty when the time for irrigation had arrived. This, however, as all the farmer's friends thought, was no great matter, for in another part of the field, and equally accessible to him, was a remarkably full and reliable well of living water, out of which he might take as large a supply as he liked, and still it would seem to be as full as ever.

On the ground of his possessing this well, the man was much envied by his neighbors; for they said to themselves, that with such a spring within reach he need not fear the coming of the severest drought. He had always that at command whereby his field might be made fertile. But they might have saved themselves the trouble of casting an envious eye upon the farmer's riches, for, strange to say, he turned his back upon the well—made no use of it—never drew from it—let its water run to waste, while he spent his whole time and efforts in trying to repair the old tank, which experience had so often taught him could hold no water.

The fact was, the man was mad. No sane man would have acted as he hid; and the end of the story is, that the soil being never moistened, the crop failed, and the farmer and his family perished with hunger.



HOW TO DIGEST A SERMON.

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." JAMES I, 23-25.

It has been said that no book is worth reading once that does not need to be read twice; that no book is worth reading once that is not worth reading again, and thinking about, and talking and dreaming over afterward.

Before newspapers were common, the sermons of the Sab-

bath were treated somewhat in this way. The sermon was freighted with materials for thinking, and talking, and praying over the rest of the week. In the south parish of Andover, as we are told, the people came together, in the intermission, after they had eaten the lunch which the ample saddle-bags and capacious pockets supplied, and listened, while one of the older men went over the topics of the sermon, head by head. The afternoon discourse was treated in the same way by each family after reaching home. The members of the family compared notes, and talked over the matters of interest, considered the doctrines, recalled the illustrations, and salted all down for the week's use. But sermons have now come to be as ephemeral as light literature. No one thinks of the morning edition, when the evening edition is out. The minister, perhaps, has had some subject on his mind for months. While meeting his weekly duties, he has been revolving this subject. It has gradually taken shape, and has been growing in sunshine and showers. When the matter has fairly ripened, after a week of special care and labor in writing and praying it into the form of a sermon, he lays it before his people. They greatly enjoy the rich suggestions of their minister. They appreciate the discourse. But not one hearer in ten recalls the text Monday morning. Even in the congregations of the gifted preachers who present their apples of gold in pictures of silver, the sermon does not last over the Sabbath to the multitude.

Now, there is a way in which Christians can make the preaching conducive to their enjoyment and advantage in an eminent degree; and that is, by making the subjects of each Sunday's sermons the special subjects of religious reading and Bible study, and of meditation and prayer for the week following.

We know a merchant in Boston who is very fond of music, and who has no little skill in playing on several instruments. But he can learn nothing by note. He was not taught in early life, and does not know how to read music.

He catches easily, by his ear, any thing that interests him, however. When a new musical piece of excellence is performed, he sits and listens and enjoys it to the full. As long as he can hear it played, he listens and enjoys the same strains. Once, twice, three times do not exhaust the source of gratification. He goes home at night, and though it is late, he rises in the morning long before breakfast, and sits down to his piano and plays over the sweet strains which he has heard. And so for weeks he keeps playing it over, and humming the air while he is selling goods. He gains thus, perhaps, a month's pleasure out of a single entertainment, feeding on it in his soul, relishing it in every part.

Now, a sermon, caught by the ear, moving upon the feelings, kindling, instructing, and touching the springs of life, does not spend its force at one sitting. It needs to be played over. The truth needs to be meditated alone, and brooded over. It needs to be looked at in the first light of morning, and in the dusky shadows of evening, and in the gloom of the cloudy days which every week will bring. The consoling thoughts of the sermon need to be hummed soothingly over, as you are harassed by business, in order to take in their fullness. The preaching of one Sabbath ought to ring out, and ring on, through the week, till the echoes are caught up and renewed the succeeding Sabbath. The minister unfolds some spiritual doctrine, develops some duty, illuminates some portion of Scripture. Now, we would say to a Christian, if you would feed upon the word, and grow thereby, let the subject of the sermon be your subject for the week. Work the vein the preacher has opened. Follow out the suggestions he has started. Let your reading be in the direction they lead. Take your Bible and collect its teachings on the points involved. Make the topics of the sermon the special object of Bible study during the rest of the week. Meditate on the various bearings of the theme. Pray in that direction. Live in that direction. Make it a point to possess yourself of all that is within your

reach on the subjects opened on the Sabbath. How rich, then, the sermon would be to you! How it would consolidate your knowledge! How it would concentrate your graces! Instead of a loose, careless conning over of the Bible, here to-day, and there to-morrow, you would have a special purpose, and thus an ever-fresh interest in reading. Your mind would be laboring all the week with great thoughts. By such a process, you would find yourself gaining a mastery of the Scriptures, and a clearness of conception and justness of apprehension of important doctrines, and a fullness of religious knowledge.

And let ministers feel that their preaching is only furnishing a text, and giving suggestions on which Christians will be elaborating a sermon that is to last a week long, and ministers will make better sermons. It would be difficult, at present, in some cases, to make the preaching last through the week. It would be very thin diet by the middle of the week. But let there be such a habit on the part of Christians, and it would compel, and it would allow, the preacher to put more solid substance into the sermon. It would marvelously quicken him, to know that his words were not to die upon the air, but were to live and breathe in hundreds of Christian hearts, be made the theme of investigation, and the food of thought for days to come.

We should have stalwart preachers, and we should have stalwart hearers, if sermons should be thus put on to be worn through the week. Every sermon would be an event. Every sermon would be adding another story to the character—lifting the Christian higher toward heaven.



THE GOOD RED HAND.

"He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." ISAIAH XL, 29.

WHILE residing in Ireland, Charlotte Elizabeth was brought to the knowledge of Christ; and as his love was

shed abroad in her heart abundantly, she sought the salvation of others. The deplorable condition of some poor street children excited her sympathies, and set her to work. Among those she endeavored to instruct was "Poor Jack," a dumb boy of some eight or ten years of age; a puny little fellow of heavy aspect, and wholly destitute of the life and animation that generally characterize that class who are obliged to use looks and gestures as a substitute for words. Here was a difficult case; but the more insurmountable the obstacle appeared to be, the more earnestly did Christian love give itself to its noble work.

By a sudden brush, the boy's mind broke its prison, and looked around on every object as though never before beheld. All seemed to appear in so new a light to him; curiosity, in which he had been very strangely deficient, became an eagerly-active principle, and nothing that was portable did he fail to bring to his teacher, with an inquiring shake of the head, and the word "What?" spelled by the fingers. By a gradual and interesting process he was led into the recognition of a Supreme Being, and into the reception of the Gospel. As his mental faculties developed, he became animated and happy, and would come to his teacher each morning with a budget of new thoughts. Some of these were expressed in a way at once original and beautiful; such as the idea of the lightning, that it was produced by a sudden opening and shutting of God's eye; and the rainbow, that it was the reflection of God's smile.

The most remarkable of these conceptions was, perhaps, the following: He said that when he had lain a good while in the grave, God would call aloud, "Jack!" and he would start and say, "Yes, me Jack." Then he would rise and see multitudes standing together, and God sitting on a cloud with a very large book in his hand—he called it "Bittle book"—and would beckon him to stand before him, while he opened the book, and looked at the top of the page till he came to the name of John B——.

In that page, he said, God had written all his "bads"—every sin he had ever done—and the page was full. So God would look, and strive to read it, and hold it to the sun for light, but it was all, "No, no, nothing, none;" for when he had first given his heart to Jesus Christ, *he* had taken the book out of God's hand, and found that page, and pulling from his palm something which filled up the hole made by the nail, had allowed the wound to bleed, and passed his hand down the page, so that God could see nothing of Jack's bads, only Jesus Christ's blood. Nothing being thus found against him, God would shut the book, and then he would remain standing before him till the Lord Jesus came, and saying to God, "My Jack," would put his arms around him, and bid him stand with the angels till the rest were judged.

And is it not written, "The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found?" And again, "I, even I, am he who blotteth out thy transgressions?" How could the plan of a sinner's salvation be set forth more clearly than in this thought of poor Jack's?

During his last illness he frequently recurred to this idea, and would say to his friends with a look of infinite satisfaction, "Good red hand!" His view of Christ's all-sufficiency was realizing, and it was quite evident that the Gospel was his sole and solid support. Truly "he giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

THE INDWELLING WORD.

"Thy word have I hid in my heart." PSALM CXIX, 9.

A LITTLE girl, ten years of age, who had long been nursing a sick sister, and whose mother was in feeble health, was getting quite worn out. One morning as she trudged along to procure medicine—as she thought how hard it was to be always waiting on the invalid when

other children were at play; and then, when she thought how likely it was that her sister would die—betwixt weariness and grief she began to weep bitterly. But a sudden thought crossed her mind. Her tears were dried, and her step grew light and nimble. After she returned, noticing how cheerfully she went about her work, and how briskly and easily she did it, her mother asked the reason. It turned out that the verse had come into her memory, “I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.” Day and night, thenceforward she never wearied in her attendance on the invalid. Her cheerful countenance did more good than any medicine. And ere long she had her reward, for her sister recovered.

Mr. Simeon of Cambridge was at one time an object of much contempt for Christ’s sake and the Gospel’s. And though usually he bore up bravely, it was very trying to know that nobody liked to be seen in his company; and one day as he walked along with his little Testament in his hand, he prayed that God would send him some cordial in his Word. Opening the book, his eye alighted on the text, “They found a man of Cyrene, Simon (or Simeon) by name; him they compelled to bear Jesus’ cross.” “And when I read that,” he tells us, “I exclaimed, ‘Lord, lay it on me; lay it on me; I will gladly bear the cross for thy sake.’ And I henceforth bound persecution as a wreath of glory round my brow.”

In the Tower of London you have read the verse inscribed by one of the bloody Mary’s prisoners, “He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.” And you remember how it is related of the Non-Conformist, Mr. Lawrence, of Baschurch, that when some one reminded him that he had eleven good arguments against giving up his living, and asked him how he meant to maintain his wife and ten children, he answered, “They must all live on the 6th of Matthew, ‘Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these

things shall be added unto you.' ” And countless instances might be quoted where, to every range of intellect, from the little child up to the learned philosopher, and in all emergencies, from a matter of daily routine up to a question of life or death, the all-fitting and all-foreseeing word of Christ has been the antidote of temptation, the incentive to duty, the joy in tribulation. On its nail fastened in a sure place thousands have suspended their earthly future as well as their eternal all; and they have not been confounded. With its sword turning either way, they have put to flight armies of doubts and fears, and whole legions of Satanic suggestions. Times without number on the guilty conscience or the troubled spirit has a healing leaf descended, fresh from the Tree of Life, and charmed into the evening's ecstasy the morning's anguish. None of that word shall return to the great Speaker “void;” for, according to their various faith or susceptibility, absorbed into the soul of disciples, it will outlive the most enduring of tablets, and outshine the most brilliant of transcripts; and although every Bible should perish, the whole of Christ's sayings might be recovered in his living epistles. They might all be collected again in the hearts of Christ's friends.—*Dr. James Hamilton.*

THE GREAT BED-PLATE CASTING.

“ And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” ROMANS VIII, 28.

HAVE you seen the costly preparations for some great casting of iron—the bed-plate of a vast marine-engine, for instance? The sooty workmen, at mine and furnace, have been long at work digging the ore and blasting the iron. There it lies corded in yonder piles of ugly crudeness and grim strength! Here, beneath this lofty roof, full of rough and shapeless materials, of vast cranes and monstrous tackles and chains from which the world might hang, with

the dying light of day struggling in from windows in the roof, and the flaming light of furnaces flashing up from its floor, the preparations have been and are still going on! For months the skillful workmen, in the molding-sand that forms the floor, have been busy with firm and cunning fingers forming the mold, with every mortise, bolt-hole, groove, stay, inclination, anxiously adjusted and arranged; and there it lies buried in the ground. Near by the furnaces, heated seven times hot, hold the obdurate metal seething and boiling in their hellish jaws. From minute to minute the doors are opened, and out flows—amid flames and sparks that threaten the destruction of the building, and amid which the workmen stand as unharmed and unterrified as the three men that walked in the prophet's furnace—buckets of molten iron, that are borne with staggering steps and emptied into the vast caldron, from which the mold is finally to be filled. The long-expected and anxiously-prepared-for moment at length approaches. Nay, it is precipitated. For the door of the reservoir leaks with the immense weight of its raging contents. At a word the channels for the molten iron are cleared! the foreman stands at the bursting gate! the workmen, with bars and tools suited each to its end, take their posts, while the master, standing over the mold, and looking calmly but earnestly round—finally gives the signal! Up flies the gate, forth leaps the furious current, the channels blaze with fire, the mold trembles and smokes with the inrushing contents, the loosened gases explode from their tubes! but silence and suspense hold the assembly still. The master stands intently watching the shrews for signs of any superfluity of metal. Perhaps there has been miscalculation, and not enough? Perhaps the mighty weight has crushed the mold, and the metal is sinking into the ground? Perhaps the casting is a failure, and the labor of months is to be repeated? A moment must settle the results of a whole quarter's toil; the profits of years of industry are at stake; the pride of the engineer, the suspense of the workmen, all

feelings of sympathy, are concentrated in this anxious minute. But lo! just here bubbles feebly up the tardy metal, rises a few inches above the surface, and stops—not a gallon of metal to spare, not a hundred pounds over, in a casting of forty tons! Success, proud, happy, glorious success, has crowned the arduous work! But had it failed! to break up the obdurate mass and prepare for another attempt, is a work of immense labor and expense—not to name the toil and time already wasted!

And is not this just what God must do, and will do, with our hardened and ill-fashioned souls, run into misshapen molds and disappointing forms—when he is looking for the image of his Son? What hammers shall break up our souls? what furnace shall remelt our substance? God only knows. But think of a life's labor thrown away!

You may be beginning a new year of your life. For twelve months God has been at work with his providence upon your souls. He has done *his* part, and always with reference to one end—your conformity to the image of his Son. How have you done yours? Have you used the mold he furnishes you in his Son? have you been putting all you are into the furnace which is designed to prepare your souls to take on the likeness of Christ? Have you had God's will, Christ's character, your spiritual and holy destiny, steadily in view these twelve months gone? Have you been ceaselessly, patiently, regularly, at work in the great object and aim of your lives through this period? I looked upon a steam-engine recently, connected with a blast-furnace, which for thirteen months, day and night, had not one instant ceased its smooth, calm, powerful, efficient, and changeless motion. What an image of patient persistency! of laborious industry! of singleness of aim! nay, what a triumph of human skill! There was a year's work well done. How much had that unconscious servant meanwhile earned for its master? And can not the inventor and owner of that machine do a year's steady, telling, single-eyed, and unwearied work? Is the brain a less per-

fect workmanship than the steam-engine? Is the heart a less constant fire than the forge? Is the soul incapable of as firm a bed, as steady a motion, as resolute a task, as the mill or the machine? Let us see what another year can do to prove our spiritual competency to do a man's work for our characters. We want only that faith, and courage, and devotion which we show in our affairs, directed on ourselves, to bring miracles to pass in self-improvement, growth in grace, and likeness to Christ. In the name of your rational fears and your rational hopes—in the name of your immortal souls—I beseech you to pledge the coming twelve months of your life to the realization of religion; to the study of your eternal destiny; to the acquaintance, and emulation, and fellowship of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.—*H. W. Bellows.*

LIZZIE ASHBROOK.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." MATTHEW x, 32, 33.

"Now, girls, I *have* got news for you!"

The speaker was a showy girl, dressed in the height of fashion. She was just entering the room where sat several young ladies, her cousins, pursuing various household employments.

"What is it, Ada?" cried one and another.

"You'll never believe it: Lizzie Ashbrook has professed religion!" was the half-serious, half-laughing reply.

"Lizzie Ashbrook!" The girls repeated the name, more or less in surprise.

"Lizzie Ashbrook," said the elder cousin, Julia, seriously; "why! she was forever making sport of the subject."

"And such a fashionable girl: why, she would hardly look at a person who was ill dressed," remarked another.

"Her father, an infidel of the rankest sort, too, what will he say?"

"I heard that he had turned her out of the house," said Ada.

There was a long silence.

"Well"—it was abruptly broken by the youngest of the family—"we shall see now if there is the reality in religion that Christians talk about. I do n't believe there is a single person in any branch of her family who is religious. She will have unusual trials to undergo; I would n't be in her place."

"Trials! pshaw! there's no such thing as persecution in these days; it would be a rare thing to see a martyr!" This was lightly spoken by Ada, who had been Lizzie's nearest friend, and who felt an unusual bitterness springing up in her heart toward the young girl, who she knew could no longer enjoy her companionship as of yore.

The cousins made an early call on Lizzie, who received them with her accustomed grace, and a sweeter smile than usual. Yet she was pale, and though there was a purer, a holier expression on her beautiful face, yet she appeared like one wearied a little with some external struggle, in which she was the sufferer. Although she did not speak directly of the new vows she had taken upon her, the new peace she had found, her visitors could see clearly and distinctly the wondrous change in dress, in manner, and even in countenance.

Lizzie was engaged in marriage to a thorough-bred man of the world. George Philips loved his wine, his parties, the race-course, the theater, the convivial and free and easy club. The Sabbath was his day of pleasure, and many a time had Lizzie graced his elegant equipage, radiant in beauty, on the holy day, as they swept off to the haunts of the gay, to some hotel, or some meeting of kindred spirits. He bore a dashing exterior, was intellectual—a sparkling wit, courted, caressed, admired every-where.

His brow darkened as he heard the news. What! the

girl of his choice, the woman he would place at the head of his brilliant household, become a canting Christian! Nonsense! he did n't believe it; he would see for himself. He did n't furnish his parlors for prayer meetings. He wanted no long-faced ministers to visit his wife, not he. It was a ridiculous hoax. It must have originated in the club-room. What! the daughter of Harlan Ashbrook, the freest of free-thinkers? "Ha! ha! a capital joke—a very clever joke—nothing more."

He called upon her not long after the visit before mentioned. His cold eye scanned her from head to foot; but how sweetly, how gently, she met him! Surely the voice that was melting music before, was heavenly in its tones now. All the winning grace was there; all the high-bred ease; the merry smile dimpled her lips; but there was a something that thrilled him from head to foot with apprehension, because it was unlike her usual self. What could it be?

At length, lightly, laughingly, he referred to the report he had heard. For one moment the frame trembled, the lips refused to speak; but this passed; and something like a flush crossed her beautiful face, it lighted the eyes anew, it touched the cheek with a richer crimson, as she said:

"George, please do n't treat it as a jest, for truly, thank God! I have become a Christian! O George!"—her clasped hands were laid upon one of his—"I have only just begun to live! If you knew"—

The proud man sprang to his feet, almost throwing her hands from him in his impatient movement; and not daring to trust his voice, for an oath was uppermost, he walked back and forth for a moment. Then he came and stood before her. His forehead was purpled with the veins that passion swelled, his face was white, and his voice unsteady, as he exclaimed:

"Do you mean to say that you will really cast your lot among these people; that for them you will give up all—*all?*"

"I *will* give up all for Christ!" The words were very soft and low, and not spoken without reflection.

For one moment he locked his lips together, till they looked like steel in their rigidity; then he said, in a full passionate voice:

"Lizzie—Miss Ashbrook—if these are your sentiments, these your intentions, we *must* go different ways."

This was very cruel—this was a terrible test; for that young girl had, as it were, placed her soul in his keeping. Before a higher, a purer love was born in her heart, she had made up her human love—an absolute idolatry; and the thought of losing him, even now, caused her cheek to grow ashen and her eyes dim.

As he saw this, his manner changed to entreaty. He placed before her the position he would give her; lured her by every argument that might appeal to the womanly heart. And he knew how to win by entreaty, by the subtilest casuistry. His was a masterly eloquence. He could adapt his voice, his language, his very looks, with the most adroit cunning, to the subject and object of his discussion. More than once the gentle spirit of the young Christian felt that she must give way—that only help direct from the Fountain of life could sustain her with firmness to resist him to the end of the interview.

At last it was a final—"All this will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me!" It came to this—"Christ or me!" There could be no compromise; it was—"Christ or me." And standing there, clothed in the mantle of a new and heavenly faith, with its light shining in her heart, and playing over her pale features, she said, with a firmness worthy the martyrs of old—"Christ!"

Though his soul was filled with rage so that he could have gnashed his teeth, the slight figure standing there in its pure white robes against the background of crimson hangings—the eye that cast an earnest, upward glance—the brow that seemed to have grown white with spirit-light—the attitude so self-possessed yet so modest, so quiet yet so

eloquent, filled him with a strange admiring awe. But the hostility toward religion was so strong in his heart that it bore down all his tenderness, almost crushed his love, and he parted from her for the last time coldly, and like a stranger.

The engagement was broken off; but who can tell the struggles it cost?

This was but the first trial: there came another, while yet the blow lay heavy on her heart.

Her father had never been very loving toward her. He was proud of her; she was the brightest gem of his splendid home. She was beautiful, and gratified his vanity; she was intellectual, and he heard praise lavished upon her mind, her person, with a miser's greedy ear, for she was his—a part of himself; she belonged to him.

He called her into his study, and required a minute account of the whole matter. He had heard rumors, he said; had seen a surprising and not agreeable change in her; she had grown mopish, quiet. What was the cause? It was a great trial, with that stern, unbelieving face, full of hard lines, opposite, to stand and testify for Christ. But He who has promised, was with her, and she told the story calmly, resolutely.

“And do you intend to join the Church?”

“Yes, sir.” A gleam of hope entered her heart; she did not expect his approval, but she could not think he might refuse to sanction this important step.

“You know your aunt Eunice has long wanted you to become an inmate of her home.”

“Yes, sir;” the gentle voice faltered.

“Well, you can go now. Unless you give up this absurd idea, and trample it under your feet, I do not wish you to remain with me. Be as you were before, and you shall want for no luxury, no affection; follow this miserable notion, and henceforth I am only your father in name.”

She did forsake all for Him; but her step became slow, her form wasted, her eye hollow, her cheek sunken. The

struggle had been too much for a frame unable to cope with any overwhelming sorrow. Her pastor, as he marked the brilliant hectic and the trembling frame, thought of the graveyard and the mold—she thought only of the glorious immortality *beyond*. Swiftly she went down into the valley, but it was not dark to her. Too late the man who had so sorely tempted her kneeled by the side of her bed, and implored her forgiveness. Too late? No, not too late for his own salvation, for in that hour his eyes were opened to the sinfulness of his life, and by her dying pillow he promised solemnly to give his heart to God. Her father, too, proud infidel though he was, looked on his wasted child, triumphing over death, with wonder and with awe. Such a dying scene it is the privilege of but few to witness; she had given up *all*, absolutely *all*, for Christ, and in the last hour she, like Stephen, saw heaven opened. Her face was angelic, her language rapture, her chamber the gate of heaven. And like one who, but the other day, untied the sandals of life, and moved calmly and trustingly down the one step between earth and heaven, so she said, with a smile inexpressibly sweet, “Sing!” And they sang—

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood
From thy wounded side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure,
Save me from its guilt and power.

Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands:
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Guilty, plead thy righteousness;
Vile, I to the fountain fly,
Wash me, Savior, or I die!

While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
See Thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!"

At its close they heard one word—the last. It was—
"CHRIST."

PRAYER ANSWERED AFTER DEATH.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
JAMES V, 16.

MANY years since, some young men belonging to the senior class in ——— college, resolved to unite in earnest prayer for a young and thoughtless classmate. In a few months the session closed, and the class and the praying band were scattered. But the soul of that godless young man was felt as a burden on the heart of one of his pious classmates, and though alone, he continued his supplications. Then, in his far-distant home, he found one like-minded with himself, and he persuaded the stranger to join him in his petition for his former companion.

A few years passed away, and the two classmates met again upon their native soil. The careless youth was still careless, and was then engaged in the study of law in a neighboring city. The other, it was manifest, had come back to his early home to die. An incurable disease was wearing out his life. Still his desire for his friend's salvation was as fresh and strong as ever. It seemed to grow more intense as life waned. It mingled in all his thoughts; every person whom he saw, whom he knew as a praying person, he besought, saying, "O, pray for that young man!" and to the last hour he continued his own intercessions.

His early companion, for whom his heart had so yearned, stood at his grave, and saw it close upon him with no other emotion than that of regret for a friend of his youthful

days. The prayer of the dead was yet unanswered. But ere the grass grew over that grave the Spirit of God was poured out upon the Church in which they in their boyhood had worshiped, and one of the first converts was the young man so long and so earnestly prayed for. He then devoted himself to God in the ministry of his Son, and his hand has recorded these facts, that it may add another illustration to the truths, that the Lord's ear is not heavy that he can not hear, that he is "not slack concerning his promises," and that the "effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much."

A YOUNG DISCIPLE CROSSING THE RIVER.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." PSALM XXIII, 4.

WAITING for medical discernment to signify when the last possible effort to lengthen out the days of my daughter Catherine had been made, one morning I received the intimation that those days would, in all probability, be but very few. After the physician had left the house, and I had sought help and strength from God, I lost no time, but took my place at the dear patient's side, to make the announcement.

God help those on whom he lays such a duty! The hour had virtually come in which father and child must part, and the father was to break that message to his child. But how could mortal strength endure the effort?

Before I left my room for hers, there came to my mind these words—"But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Trusting in that promise, I sat down, as it were,

over against the sepulcher, to prepare my child for her entrance into it—nay, for her departure into heaven.

The gradual arrival of the truth to her apprehension, through questions which she began to ask, and my answers to them, finally led her to inquire if I supposed she could not live long. I told her that the physician thought that she was extremely weak, and that we must not be surprised at any sudden event in her case. She said, without any change of countenance, “Why, father, you surprise me; I thought that I might get well; is it possible that I can not live long? I have thought of recovering much more than of dying. . . . It seems a long space to pass over between this and heaven, in so short a time. I wonder how I can so suddenly obtain all the feelings which I need for such a change.” These expressions I wrote down immediately after that interview. I told her, in reply, that she had been living at peace with God through his Son; that it had hitherto been her duty to live, and to strive for it; but now God had indicated his will concerning her, and she might be sure that God will always give us feelings suited to every condition in which he sees fit to place us.

On seeing her again toward evening, I found that the expression of her sick face—the weary, exhausted look of one grappling with a stronger power—had passed away, and, in exchange, there was peace, and even happiness. She began herself to say, “When you told me this forenoon that I could not live, it surprised me; but I have come to it now, and it is all right. Every thing is settled. I have nothing to do—no fear, no anxiety about any thing. More passages of Scripture and verses of hymns have come to my mind to-day, than in all my sickness hitherto.” Wishes respecting some family arrangements were then expressed, particularly with reference to the younger children, and these wishes were uttered in about the same tone and manner as though we were parting for a temporary absence from each other. The mother of my youngest child had, at her death, given her in special charge to this

daughter, and the latter wished to live that she might educate her. She made the transfer of her little trust with calmness, and then her "Good night" was uttered with a gentle playfulness, like that of her early days.

The next forenoon she renewed the conversation. She said, "In the night I awoke many times, and always with this thought—I am not going to live. Instead of fear and dread, peace came with it. Names of Christ flowed in upon my mind; and once I awoke with these words in my thoughts—'And there shall be no night there.' Now I know that I am to die, I feel less nervous. I have a calm, unruffled feeling." She expressed some natural apprehensions, only, about the possibility of dissolution not having occurred when we should suppose that she was no more. I told her how kindly God had ordered it that we do not all die together, but only one by one, the survivors doing all that the departed would desire—which satisfied her, and removed her only fear.

She asked leave to make a request respecting her grave: that, if any device were placed upon the stone, it might be in the form of flowers, which had been such a joy and consolation to her in her sickness. She named the lily-of-the-valley and rosebuds. "I love the white flowers," she said. "If you think best, let them be represented in some simple way.

"I know," she continued, "that I am a great sinner; but I also believe that my sins are washed away by the blood of Christ." The way of justification by faith was clear to her mind. She knew whom she believed, and was persuaded that He was able to keep that which she had committed to him against that day.

In her whispering voice, which disease had for some time so nearly hushed, she said, "I shall sing in heaven." Her voice had been the charm of many a pleasant circle. But she added, "I shall no more sing

'I'm a pilgrim, and I'm a stranger;
I can tarry, I can tarry but a night.'

And in a moment she added,

"Of that country to which I am going,
My Redeemer, my Redeemer is the light."

"Some people," she said, "wish to die in order to get rid of pain. What a motive! I am afraid that sometimes they get rid of it only to renew it. There was—." And here she checked herself, saying, "But I will not mention any name;" a feeling of charitableness and tenderness coming over her, as though she might be thought to have judged a dying person harshly.

The day before she died, as I was spending the Sabbath forenoon by her, she breathed out these words:

"O, how soft that bed must be,
Made in sickness, Lord, by thee!
And that rest, how soft and sweet,
Where Jesus and the sufferer meet!"

In almost the same breath, she said, "O, see that beautiful yellow," directing my attention to a sprig of acacia in a bunch of flowers, all showing that her religious feelings were not raptures, but flowed along upon a level with her natural delight at beautiful objects. To illustrate this I have mentioned several of the incidents already related.

She spoke of a young friend who has much that the world gives its votaries to enhance her prospects in this life. I said, "Would you exchange conditions with her?" "Not for ten thousand worlds," was her energetic reply. "No!" she added; "I fear she has not chosen the good part."

On Sabbath afternoon the mortal conflict was upon her. The restlessness of death, the craving for some change of posture, the cold sweats, the labored respiration, all had the effect merely to make her ask, "How long do you think I must suffer?" That labored breathing tired her; she wished that I could regulate it for her. "How long," said she, "will it probably continue?"

I told her that heaven was a free gift at the last as well as at first; that we could not pass within the gate at will,

but must wait God's time; that there were sufferings yet necessary to her complete preparation for heaven, of which she would see the use hereafter, but not now. This made her wholly quiet; and after that she rode at anchor many hours, hard by the inner light-house, waiting for the Pilot.

The last words which she uttered to me, an hour before she died, were, "I am going to get my crown." I wondered at her in my thoughts—O, help my unbelief!—to hear a dying sinner so confident.

Between two and three o'clock on Monday afternoon, January 19th, she was quietly receiving some food from the nurse, when suddenly she said, "The room seems dark." She then made a surprising effort, such as she had been incapable of for some time, and reached forward from her pillow, saying, "Who is that at the door?" The nurse was with her alone, and at her side, the family being at table. Coming to her room, we found that she was apparently sinking into a deep sleep, as though it were only a sleep, profound and quiet.

I asked her if she knew me.

She made no answer.

I said, "You know Jesus." A smile played about her mouth. We rejoiced and wept for joy.

I then said, "If you know father, press my hand." She gave me no sign—that smile being her last intelligent act. And so she passed within the veil.

She who was the sweet singer of my little Israel was no more. The child whose sense of beauty made her the swiftest herald to me of every fair discovery and new household joy, will never greet me again with her surprises of gladness. She who, leaning upon my arm as we walked, silently conveyed to me such a sense of evenness, firmness, dignity; she whose childlike love was turning into the womanly affection for a father; she who was complete in herself, as every good child is, not suggesting to your thoughts what you would have a child be, but filling out the orb of your ideal beauty, still partly in outline; her

seat, her place at the table, at prayers, at the piano, at Church; the sight of her going out and coming in; her tones of speech, her helpful spirit and hands, and all the unfinished creations of her skill, every thing that made her that which the growing associations with her name had built up in our hearts—all is gone, for this life; it is removed like a tree; it is departed like a shepherd's tent.

And all this, too, is saved. It survives, or I would not, I could not write thus. There comes to my sorrowing heart some such message as the sons of Jacob brought to their father, when they said, "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt."

Jesus of Nazareth has been in my dwelling, and has done a great work of healing. He has saved my child; saved her to be a happy spirit; forever saved her for himself, to employ her powers of mind and heart in his blissful service; saved her for the joyful welcome and embraces of her mother, and of a second mother, who laid deep and strong foundations in her character for goodness and knowledge. He has saved her for me, through all eternity. She will be my sweet singer again; she will have in store for me all the wonderful discoveries which her intense love of beauty will have made her treasure up, to impart, when the child becomes, as it were, parent, for a little while, to the soul of the parent in heaven, new-born.

We sometimes think that they miss great good who depart from us in early years; that one who has arrived at the entrance to the world's great feast must be sadly disappointed to be led away, never to go in. Now, it is true that we must not shrink from the battle of life; we must take upon ourselves, if God ordains it, the great jeopardy of disappointment and sorrow, and the chance of life's joys; we must each stand in his lot; we must send children forth into the harvest of the earth for sheaves, and whether they faint and die under their load, or deck themselves with garlands—still, let them be laborers together with God, and let us not seek exemption for them. But if God ordains

their early translation to heaven, what can earth afford them in the way of pleasure, granting the cup to be full and unalloyed, to be compared with fullness of joy? Fair maidens in heaven—and O, how many of them has consumption gathered in!—fair maidens there are like the white flowers, which are sacred to peculiar times and scenes. How goodly must be their array! What a perpetual spring-tide of vivacious joy and delight do they create in heaven! It is pleasant to have a child among them.

THE SOUL'S RENEWAL.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."
PSALM LI, 10.

DAVID does not say, Help the community to which I belong to improve itself, and let me share a general interest in our mutual advances in truth and goodness. Religion, though a domestic, a social, and a public interest, is, primarily, a personal interest. All sin is individual. There is no abstract, no public, no common sin. All virtue is individual. There is no abstract, public, common virtue, except the aggregate of individual virtue. All sense of sin—penitence, confession, regeneration, sanctification, salvation—is personal. Sympathy, community of effort, fellowship, help and perfect individual struggles. It is far easier, in the midst of striving consciences, aspiring hearts, prayerful souls, to maintain our private struggle for the spiritual crown. But, after all, every man, every woman, every soul, must seek unto God for itself—must have its own direct, personal experience, its own act of submission, its own welcome to the spirit of truth, its own adoption as a child of God. Every one must say "create in *me* a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." And blessed are those among you who have made that prayer from the depths of troubled and sin-torn hearts, and have prevailed with God to answer it! I need not tell you that

I have no foolish disparagements to offer to the great principles of morality; no unworthy slights to cast on common honesty, social amenity, rectitude in business, neighborly kindness, regular habits, freedom from vices. As well might one disparage plowing, and sowing, and cultivating, because they are not sun and rain, and nature's great chemistry; or neglect barns, and fences, and tools, and methods, because they are not the great gifts of the soil. But certainly all the good habits, and all the good principles in the world, do not by themselves succeed in sweetening the temper, subduing the will, elevating the soul, and making men and women conquerors of their selfishness, their tempers, their self-dissatisfactions. I know nothing, alas, more discouraging than the dead stop in the growth of character, the unchangeable fixity at a certain point, in the souls of the self-culturing class, so called, the people who are trying to find their way to heaven on a road they make as they go along. Instead of taking the wings of a dove, and mounting on the breath of God's Spirit, ever buoying them up, and supplying them with incitement and support, they creep on their hands and feet along the dusty road; instead of opening their sails to the wind of heaven, they feel their way along the shore, safe and sound, in their own estimation, only when they can touch bottom and push themselves with their own oar!

"But oars alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the heavenly coast;
The breath of heaven must fill the sail,
Or all the toil is lost."

There is nothing unnatural in this fact, much less any thing incredible. How should men hope to rise above themselves, except by the aid of a power external to, and above, themselves? Can we save ourselves, pray to ourselves, conquer ourselves, free ourselves? We might just as well attempt to jump off our own shadow! And this is the fatal mistake of all attempts to substitute a system of social ethics for a system of true religion. Religion

represents a bond, a partnership between man and God. It contains offers and promises of aid and deliverance. It gives assurances of the existence and presence of infinite powers, willing and anxious to do for man what he can not do for himself. Can he be said to be a religious man in any proper sense, who does not believe that God has any access to his soul, or care that he has any access to it, or who makes no dependence on God's help in his struggles with sin and his aspirations toward excellence? Yet men and women with excellent intentions, who want to do their duty, and to have right affections and clean hearts, go on for years, discouraged at finding themselves still the slaves of their own faults and weaknesses, and all because they have never sought with any sufficient faith and earnestness God's aid and Christ's Spirit, to support and make adequate their own efforts. They are children of the law, trying to fulfill in their own moral strength what it requires the grace of God, his free Spirit flowing into the soul, to accomplish. Why, even a dog can, in the inspiration of his master's presence, do what he is utterly unable to do alone. A child, supported by the voice and eye of his mother, is another being. And is a man, unconscious of God's eye and God's Spirit, truly himself, or to be expected to be able to accomplish those moral and spiritual transformations, which convert the selfish into the disinterested, the passionate into the self-restrained, the vicious into the virtuous, the careless into the believing?

If, my brethren, there be any good news in the Gospel, it is this, that God is willing and able to save to the uttermost; willing and able! Well does the poet Fawcett say in regard to this point:

"But he that turns to God shall live
Through his abounding grace;
His mercy will the guilt forgive
Of those that seek his face."

All that is necessary on our part is to be willing to let him do it, and believing that he can and will do it.

ONE STEP AT A TIME.

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." MATTHEW VI, 34.

I SET out on a country walk one Summer morning. I had as companion a gentle child, whose lively prattle I was accustomed on such occasions to encourage. This morning the effort seemed impossible. I was abstracted and silent; and my young friend, after a few vain attempts at sociability, amused herself by silently gathering the flowers and chasing the butterflies of the wayside. In order to take a circuit home, it was necessary to cross a stream, which, though shallow, was of considerable breadth. There was no bridge, and the water, deepened by late rains, now dashed noisily against the stepping-stones, and, in some cases, almost covered them. I began abstractedly to cross over, till I perceived that my young companion stood still on the side I had left, evidently fearing to follow.

"What, Jane! why are you not coming?"

"O, aunt, I dare not; I am afraid."

"Afraid! do you not see how firm the stones are?"

"O, there are so *many*; and the water is so deep! I shall never get over. I can not, I dare not!" and the poor little thing, naturally timid, now burst into tears.

I passed rapidly to the other side, and then returned to her. "Come, silly child," I said half angry, half amused, "do not be so foolish; you see how easily I have done it. I am not bidding you leap over the whole at once."

"O, aunt! who could do that?"

"Well, neither you nor I have to do it. We have only to take one step at a time; and *you* are not even alone; nor would the water drown you if you were to slip. Come, here is my hand; you will find each stone in itself quite firm, as you stand upon it."

Trembling and weeping, yet fearing to disobey, she began the perilous passage. The first few steps were the worst.

Her courage rose when they were over; and at last we both stood safely on the opposite bank. Little Jane sank down on the grass, as if to recover from her agitation. I seated myself beside her, and for some minutes neither of us spoke. At last she said—

“Aunt, you were quite right; *one step at a time* was not difficult.”

“Yes, my dear,” I replied; “and remember *that* in your future life, when you have more difficult undertakings to get through than crossing the Avon. Deeper streams there are to cross than it.”

The words of the child, and my almost involuntary answer, went at once to my own heart. “O,” I thought, “is not this a lesson for myself! Have not I been sinking under the anticipation of to-morrow’s burdens, instead of simply attending to the duties of to-day? Have not I been looking to the stormy waters, rather than to the Savior who walks upon their waves? Where is my confidence in the Wisdom that can not err, the Love that can not deal unkindly, the strength that is made perfect in weakness? Lord, pardon thy sinful servant; and as regards things to come, let this henceforth be my only prayer, ‘Not my will, but thine be done. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.’”

The spell of despondency was broken; the clouds dispelled. Little Jane and I both talked cheerfully, as we walked home together; and often since that day has the remembrance of the ford on the Avon acted as a reproof and a charm, when fears and forebodings have again assailed my faithless heart. “*One step at a time*,” I have repeated to myself, as I lay down at night; “*one step at a time*,” as I commenced the first duties of a new day. And faith and hope, though too feebly in exercise, have never been disappointed. “The thing that I greatly feared” has often *not* “come upon me,” or, if it has, there have been with it alleviations and comfort such as I could not have foreseen or imagined. The tasks which at a distance seemed

overwhelming, patient and prayerful effort has been enabled steadily to fulfill. Never has the promise failed, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be."

LEAVING IT IN GOD'S HANDS.

"Casting all your care upon Him, for he careth for you." 1 PETER V, 7.

"FATHER, I will leave the matter in your hands, and will give myself no further trouble about it."

"Very well, I will attend to it."

Thus spoke a dutiful son to a loving father. The matter alluded to was one which had caused the son great anxiety. The adjustment of it was within the father's power. The son was about to set out on a journey. He therefore very properly committed the matter into his father's hands.

"My son," said Mr. G., "I wish you to take this package to the river. Take it to the corner, and I will join you there, and help you to carry it."

The son had a desire to go in another direction. The request or command of his father interfered with his plans. He could not refuse to obey, but he obeyed with a sullen spirit. He took the package to the corner as directed. It was heavy, and he bore it with great difficulty. When his father offered to take it, he held on to it, and said, "I can carry it alone."

"You had better let me relieve you," said the kind father.

"I can carry it alone," said the son. The father noticed the unpleasant tones of his voice, and thought it wise to let him bear his unnecessary burden.

Not a few Christians seem to act toward God just as that son acted toward his father. God in his wise providence imposes burdens. He does not wish to have his people crushed under them. He offers to relieve them—to bear their burdens for them; but they often obstinately cling to them, and say they can bear them alone. What wonder is it that God lets such bear their unnecessary burdens!

Reader, there is no burden, nor care, nor sorrow, which Christ wishes you to bear alone. He wishes you to cast it on him; or if that be impossible, he will share it with you. What a view this gives us of the love of Christ! and what a view does our conduct in clinging to our burdens and bearing our sorrows alone, give us of our own folly and sin!

A godly man was once the object of persecution and slander. His good name was taken away. Those who had before treated him with confidence, shunned him. His burden was a heavy one. That which greatly increased its weight was the fact, that for the time his power of doing good was almost wholly destroyed.

He entered upon no labored defense of his character. He suffered in silence, and prayed for his slanderers. He sought the sympathy of a few Christian friends whose confidence in him could not be shaken.

"I have not seen you for some time," said a friend, as they met; "you look better than when I saw you last."

"I am out of trouble," was the reply. "I have laid the matter down at the feet of the Lord, and said, 'Lord, I roll that trouble off upon thee—I'll have nothing more to do with it.'"

In so doing he was obeying the command to "cast your care upon Him." The depression of sorrow was removed, and his energy revived for the service of God. We have no right to exhaust in burden-bearing the strength which ought to be employed in God's service.



EXPLAINING THE TASTE OF AN APPLE TO A GREENLANDER.

"O taste and see that the Lord is good." PSALM XXXIV, 8.

ONE of the men connected with the Grinnell Arctic Expedition, under Dr. Kane, narrates that he got into conversation at one time with a Greenlander on the relative merits

of the frigid and temperate zones. The discussion resulted in nothing except the confirmation of the Greenlander in his old view, that his was the most lovely and desirable of all places for human habitation. "I tried him," says the narrator, "on the superiority of our food over his, and endeavored to describe the taste of an apple and a peach, but I found my labor lost. Had I only been in possession of an apple or peach, and requested him to taste it, the tasting would have been infinitely more convincing than any words of mine."

A friend was listening to another in his efforts to describe the portraits and landscapes in a picture gallery. Tiring in the work, he said: "There is but one way for you to understand the merits of the several pictures on exhibition. I can not give you the shades and lineaments of any thing there. No description can. You must go up the stairs, pay your fee, and see for yourself."

He who would know what it is to enjoy God must pay the price, repent of and seek the pardon of his sins, and ask the help of the Holy Spirit. No telling by another can give you any idea of the blessedness of obeying God and of enjoying him as the life of your heart. It is a matter of personal experience. You must taste for yourself—must see and know for yourself.

THE PATH AND ITS TWO SIDES.

"And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." MATTHEW XXV, 33.

FIFTY years since there were bloody times in France. So many were killed that in some places the streets ran with blood. In one village the soldiers made use of a shocking plan. They bade all the people come out of their houses and stand on the green, that they might look at them and decide who were to be shot and who were to be saved. A path ran across the green; and as the

soldiers made up their minds what to do with one and another, they put those who were to be saved on the right side of the path, and those they meant to kill were sent to the left. When all were thus parted, the soldiers made those on the left side stand in rows, ten abreast, and, loading their own guns, they stood a little way off from their unhappy victims, and fired at them till all were killed. The shrieks of the wounded before they were quite dead, the streaming of blood, the agony of their poor friends, who stood on the other side of the path, but did not dare to stir for their help, were more horrible than pen can tell or mind conceive.

Do you think the people of that village would care to know on which side they must stand? If a mother saw her dear son told to go to the left side of the path, would she not beg and pray the soldiers, with bitter tears, that he might be on the right side instead?

A day is coming when we shall all be parted on two sides; not by man, but by God. He will put on his left hand those who have served Satan, and his own dear servants and children on his right. Then will he say to those on the left, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" but those on the right shall be welcomed into the glory of heaven with the precious words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, into the kingdom prepared for you." Matthew xxv, 31, 41. If you care to know which side you shall be on *then*, you must look to it which side you join *now*; for as the tree falls, so it must lie.

GOD EVER PRESENT WITH THE BELIEVER.

"My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." EXODUS xxxiii, 14.

THE Christian man is ever near God; he leans upon him and finds support. There is no nearness which place or sense could exhibit or establish so close as their spiritual

relationship. The mother who has sent her own heart's blood to beat beneath the Stars and Stripes in the far-off field of strife, is nearer to the young soldier as he keeps his midnight watch, though mountains, and rivers, and leagues of distance intervene, than his companion who shakes with the same cold, or languishes with the same fatigue. Thoughts of home, of the blazing hearth, the wooded hill-side, the old apple-tree, the team afield, the social gathering, the walk to Church—communion with the unseen and absent, are more natural to the soldier than the foreign sky that blazes over his head, or the soil that is so palpable to the pickax or his weary limbs. Absent do we call the souls that yearn toward each other? We are too bold. We know not that they are not more truly present to each other than ever the bodies that make them visible can be!

And surely God is not far from our prayers, from our thoughts of him, from our need of him! The truth is, he is so near, that, like the babe whose eyes are blinded by the bosom that presses and feeds it, we can not see our Parent. We may walk the earth, reft of child, of husband or wife, of father or mother, of sister or brother, of friend or acquaintance, but right by our footsteps we may have Him who can be more than these all to us.

"The opening heavens around me shine,
With beams of sacred bliss,
If Jesus shows his mercy mine
And whispers I am his."

THE FEARERS OF POVERTY.

"Their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality." 2 CORINTHIANS VIII, 2.

A widow lady, with a very small income, was remarkable for her generous liberality, especially for religious objects. In process of time, she came in possession of an ample fortune. But it was with deep regret that her pastor observed

she no longer gave spontaneously to aid the cause of Christ, and when applied to, gave grudgingly, and sometimes not at all. On one occasion, having presented a shilling, where she had formerly given a guinea, her minister felt it his duty to expostulate with her. "Ah! sir," she replied, "then I had the shilling means, but the guinea heart; now I have the guinea means, but only the shilling heart. Then I received from my Heavenly Father's hand, day by day, my daily bread, and I had enough, and to spare; now I have to look to my ample income; but I live in constant apprehension that I may come to want." And generally, who are those harassed by the fear of poverty? Who are they that have most of corroding cares about property? Not those in moderate, or in straitened worldly circumstances. A distinguished physician states, that the patients in our lunatic asylums who are and have been goaded by the fear of want, are persons of wealth, and that the dread of poverty seldom, if ever, brings insanity to the truly poor. There is many a rich poor man and many a poor rich man.

THE FORCE OF HABIT.

"As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly."
PROVERBS XXVI, 11.

MISS MARTINEAU furnishes a remarkable instance of the melancholy and inthralling power of habit. She says: "In North America a tribe of Indians attacked a white settlement, and murdered the few inhabitants. A woman of the tribe, however, carried away a very young infant, and reared it as her own. The child grew up with the Indian children, different in complexion, but like them in every thing else. To scalp the greatest possible number of enemies was, in his view, the most glorious and happy thing in the world. While he was still a youth, he was seen by some white traders, and by them conducted back to civilized life. He showed great relish for his new life, and especially a strong

desire for knowledge, and a sense of reverence, which took the direction of religion, so that he desired to become a clergyman. He went through his college course with credit, and was ordained. He fulfilled his function well, and appeared happy and satisfied. After a few years he went to serve in a settlement somewhere near the seat of war which was then going on between Britain and the United States; and before long there was fighting not far off. "I am not sure," says Miss Martineau, "whether he was aware that there were Indians in the field—the British having some tribes of Indians for allies—but he went forth in his usual dress, black coat and neat white shirt and neckcloth. When he returned he was met by a gentleman of his acquaintance, who was immediately struck by an extraordinary change in the expression of his face, and the fire of his eye, and the flush on his cheek; and also by his unusually shy and hurried manner. After asking news of the battle, the gentleman observed, 'But you are wounded?' 'No. Not wounded!' 'Why, there is blood upon the bosom of your shirt!' The young man crossed his hands firmly, though hurriedly, upon his breast; and his friend supposing that he wished to conceal a wound which ought to be looked to, pulled open his shirt, and saw—what made the young man let fall his hands in despair. From between his shirt and his breast, the gentleman took out—a bloody scalp! 'I could not help it,' said the poor victim of early habits in an agonized voice. He turned and ran too swiftly to be overtaken; betook himself to the Indians, and never more appeared among the whites."

A WORD THAT IS NEVER BROKEN.

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." REVELATION III, 18.

BUILDING ■ bridge across the Niagara River below the Falls was once thought to be impossible. The banks of the river, as all know, are very high and steep, the distance across nearly an eighth of a mile, and the river here boils

and foams so that no boat can stand the fury of the torrent a moment. Sinking piles and building arches, as with other bridges, was quite out of the question. Yet a bridge was built—a wire suspension bridge, so called, because it had to be hung or suspended by cables driven into huge blocks of granite on each bank. The cables were made of twisted wire. The bridge looked like a spider's thread.

But would the cables hold? That had to be tried. How frightened the spectators were when the engineer drove the first carriage over! The bridge quivered to the horses' tread. When he reached the middle, might not the weight snap it in two? Might not the horses grow restive and frightened? A terrible leap would that be into the raging waters two hundred and fifty feet underneath! But he crossed in safety. The bridge stood the trial. Then it had to be tried by storms. Might not a heavy gale wrench the cables from their fastenings? Gales and storms beat against it, and it stood. Might not rust eat off the wires? Time would tell; and time proved that the bridge could be relied on. "I am afraid to trust it, it looks so slender," said one of our party shrinking back, when we visited the Falls a year afterward. "It has been tried," said the guide; "there is no danger;" and we crossed safely.

A new steamboat has to be tried before passengers and freight can be trusted on board. A new railroad has its trial trips before it is thrown open to the public. A few years ago, at the opening of a railroad in Missouri, a train of cars filled with people, many of them gentlemen invited by the directors, set out from St. Louis on a trial trip. On swept the train. The party were in high spirits, when in an instant—crash, crash! Timbers split, joists snapped, one terrible plunge, and down went the cars through a breaking bridge into the river below, a heap of ruins. That bridge was trusted before it had been tried.

We usually do not trust any thing till it is tried. Boys dare not skate across a river till they have tried the new ice. The swing just put up on the tree is not deemed safe for

the children till the rope is tried. A tried friend is a friend worth having.

The Bible tells us of something that is tried. "The Word of the Lord is tried." Its declarations are tried. It declares that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Its promises are tried. "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." John Bunyan, the wild, wicked tinker-boy, went and found it so. John Newton, the swearing slave-captain, went and found it so. And how many all over the world are ready to witness this day that they went to the Son of God, and found him a very precious Savior from all their sins!

"The Word of the Lord is tried." But are its threatenings to be relied on? Yes; when it says, "Be not deceived; neither thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards shall inherit the kingdom of God." Judas found it so; when it says, "The wrath of God cometh on the disobedient." Poor King Saul found it so; when it says, "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." You and I must experience this happy change before we can enjoy the blessings of that kingdom.

"The Word of the Lord is tried." And what then? "He is a buckler to all who trust in him;" he is a sure friend, a strong friend, a fast friend, Psalm xxx. In him are safety and protection from all harm—from the sad effects of sin in this world, and its dreadful consequences in hell hereafter.

THE SHIPWRECKED PASSENGERS.

"For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" MARK VIII, 36.

SOME years ago, the ship *Shanunga*, on her way from Liverpool to New York, came in collision with a Swedish bark named the *Iduna*, from Hamburg, with two hund-

red and six persons on board. The weather was very foggy, and the Iduna sunk in about half an hour after the collision. Immediately the Shanunga's boats were put out, and, with one boat from the bark, picked up thirty-four persons only. One hundred and seventy-two persons, including the master, Captain Moberg, were lost. Captain Patten, of the Shanunga, in narrating the catastrophe, said that no statement could exaggerate the horrors of the awful moment. All the survivors that were saved were picked up from the surface of the water. One cause why so few were thus saved was, that almost all of them had, when the cry went round that the vessel was sinking, *seized their belts of gold and silver, and tied them around their waists*; thus those who attempted to save their gold lost both life and gold, being unable to sustain themselves till the boats could reach them.

How strikingly illustrative the incident of the destructive influences of an all-engrossing desire for wealth! As these poor wretches sunk the sooner, and made the death of the body the more certain by fastening their gold about them, so there are many who seem willing to barter even their souls for gold. Alas! how earnestly and anxiously do they toil and strive after that which, when obtained, instead of ministering to their soul's good, only serves as a dead weight to sink them the sooner and the deeper to perdition! "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"



THE GOSPEL DEMANDS A CHILDLIKE SPIRIT.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." MATTHEW XVIII, 4.

THE practical faith of the world, in all the truths of nature, government, economy, science, rests not upon logical and statable foundations, but upon experience. We do not use wheat, because Liebig has discovered just how

much gluten, farina, starch, sugar, there is in that grain, and what a wonderful adaptation it has to the human constitution; nor tea and coffee, because modern science has found a chemical nourishment for the brain in the phosphates they contain; but because experience has proved wheat the most wholesome and permanently-useful article of human food, and tea and coffee pleasant and salutary drinks. We do not navigate by the stars, because astronomers have proved their fixity of place, and can unfold the laws of the stellar system, but because experience, from the earliest time, made them the natural, and necessary, and reliable guides of ocean travelers. Theories are built upon experience; and long after we have adopted opinions, customs, and beliefs, scholars, thinkers, and theorists come in to tell us *why* we have adopted them; and then we begin to think them and their reasons to be the causes or foundations of our opinions and usages, which, in fact, preceded them and their evidences.

The Gospel, as a religion, asks from men who hope to profit by it the same childlike spirit now it did in the early times. It appeals no more to the inquisitive and speculating, the logical and reasoning faculties, now than then—not because the finest understandings, the most scientific minds can refute it, or that it has any thing to fear from them, but neither has it any thing to hope from them. We make a great mistake when we suppose Christianity to be on trial, or that God has submitted his Gospel, any more than his other universal gifts and mercies, to human reason, to decide for or against it. He planted Christianity in the moral world, just as he planted wheat in the natural, to grow, with or against the consent of men; to be a great and unspeakable blessing to those accepting it, to do vast services for society, to cheer and save men. And here it is doing its work. Skeptics and infidels do nothing to overthrow it; they only overthrow themselves by their assaults; philosophic believers and learned apologists do nothing to uphold it; they merely satisfy their

own minds, and may satisfy the minds of a few others, by their investigations. But we might just as well think the stars shone by the permission of astronomers, or Spring came by leave of the almanac, or conjugal and family life existed by social contrivance, or poetry were a trick of fanciful scholars, or truth the result of an agreement among philosophers, as to think religion, and the Christian religion, a conclusion of learned theologians and writers on evidences, and the best wisdom to which religious thinkers had arrived. Christianity came into the world by nobody's leave, and it stays here by nobody's leave. It sprang up a living fountain by the Word of God, out of the heart of Christ; and it has flowed on a river by its own divine affluence, fed from the will and the love and wisdom of God. There is, indeed, not only no harm, but great good, in examining its origin, and early circumstances, the genuineness of its records, the secondary causes of its spread; but all such examinations, when successful and favorable, have been made by men already believers in it—by those who had felt its power and loved its sacred influence.

THE INFALLIBLE BOOK.

"In His Word do I hope." PSALM CXXX, 5.

THE mind seeks for something reliable, and will have it. If it can not find it, it will make it. If it will not accept the Bible as such, it will make an infallible Church, or deify and enthrone the human reason. If the Bible be not authoritative, nothing is. If that be not infallible, as a revelation from God of his own character, the nature of the coming life, and the relations of this life to it, then nothing is infallible, and the faith, without which earth is a cheat and life a sorry jest, is impossible. What do we find to be the fruits of a living, practical faith in an infallible Bible? The most prominent, or that which appears most prominent, in the eyes of the world, is a missionary

spirit in contradistinction to a proselyting spirit. The really missionary work of the world has been done in the past, and is now being effected, by those who receive the Bible unmutilated as God's word to men. The noblest heroisms that illustrate the history of the race have their inspiration in implicit faith in the Bible. Men in whom life was fresh and strong, and women who were the impersonations of gentleness and delicacy, have died for it the martyr's death of fire, singing till the red-tongued flames licked up their breath. Out of it have come all pure moralities. Forth from it have sprung all sweet charities. It has been the motive power of regeneration and reformation to millions of men. It has comforted the humble, consoled the mourning, sustained the suffering, and given trust and triumph to the dying. The wise old man has fallen asleep with it folded to his breast. The simple cottager has used it for his dying pillow; and even the innocent child has breathed his last happy sigh with his fingers between its promise-freighted leaves.

Suppose it could be proved that this Bible is all a fable: in what would the demonstration benefit us? It is all we have. If it do not infallibly teach us the truth concerning the future life, and instruct us in the way of making that future life a happy one, then there is nothing that does. Suppose it could be proved that parts of this Bible are fabulous, and that those portions which are not so were inspired in a kind of general way, like the writings of all genius which is both great and good: who would be the better or the happier for it? I believe it to be demonstrable that no greater calamity could befall the human race than either the general loosening up, or the entire destruction, of faith in the Bible, even were the whole of it a cunning invention of the brain of man. Better an ass that carries than a horse that throws us. Better faith in a fable which inspires to good deeds, conducts our powers to noble ends, makes us loving, gentle, and heroic, eradicates our selfishness, establishes within us the principle of benevolence, and ena-

bles us to meet death with equanimity, if not with triumph, in hope of a glorious resurrection and a happy immortality, than the skepticism of a kingly reason, which only needs to be carried to its legitimate issues to bestialize the human race, and to drape the earth in the blackness of Tartarus.

There is much that I do not understand, and no little that seems incredible; but I see no leaf that I have either the right or the wish to tear out and cast away. I receive it as, in itself, independent of my reason and my knowledge, an authentic, inspired, and harmonious whole. I pin my faith to it, and rely upon it as the foundation of my own hope and the hope of the world.

Rational minds will ask for no higher proof that the Bible, in its entirety, is reliable as a revelation from God, than the nature of the faith which is based upon it, and the results of that faith—the noblest phenomena of human experience—the consummate fruitage of human civilization. But were it otherwise, the Bible is our best wealth. Were it widely, wildly otherwise, Heaven withhold the hand that would touch it destructively! Crazy Kate, who parted with her sailor boy at the garden gate half a century ago, believes he will come back to her again, carries still in her withered bosom the keepsake which he gave her, and decks her silvery hair and her little room with flowers, to give him fitting welcome. This hope is her all. In this she lives; and in this, fallacious though it be, resides all the significance of her life. As she stands upon the rock worn smooth by her constant feet, and gazes hopefully across the saddening sea into the yellow sunset, to catch a glimpse of the long-expected sail, would it not be inhuman to plunder her of the keepsake and toss it into the waves, or tear from her the hope that fills with blood and breath the long-perished object of her idolatry, and swells the phantom sails that are winging him to her bosom? Whether true or false, the Bible is our all—the one regenerative, redemptive agency in the world—the only word that even sounds

as if it came from the other side of the wave. If we lose it, we are lost. How many hearts in the world that could not endure the terrible darkness about them except for the light radiating from the Word of God! Will you blot out this light, will you add to the sorrow of hearts already scarcely able to beat, or will you let them draw relief from the well of salvation?

"This book is all that's left me now!

Tears will unbidden start—

With faltering lip and throbbing brow,

I press it to my heart.

For many generations past,

Here is our family tree;

My mother's hands this Bible clasp'd;

She, dying, gave it me.

Ah! well do I remember those

Whose names these records bear,

Who round the hearth-stone used to close

After the evening prayer,

And speak of what these pages said,

In tones my heart would thrill;

Though they are with the silent dead,

Here are they living still.

My father read this holy book

To brothers, sisters dear:

How calm was my poor mother's look,

Who loved God's Word to hear!

Her angel face—I see it yet!

What thronging memories come!

Again that little group is met

Within the halls of home!

Thou truest friend man ever knew,

Thy constancy I've tried;

Where all were false I found thee true,

My counselor and guide.

The mines of earth no treasure give

That could this volume buy;

In teaching me the way to live,

It taught me how to die."

THE POOR ARAB'S GIFT.

"A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."
PSALM LI, 17.

A POOR Arab was traveling in the desert, when he met with a stream of clear, sweet, sparkling water. Accustomed as he was to brackish wells, to his simple mind it appeared that such water as this was worthy of a monarch; and, filling his leathern bottle from the spring, he determined to go and present it to the caliph himself.

The poor man traveled a considerable distance before he reached the presence of his sovereign, and laid his humble offering at his feet. The caliph did not despise the little gift brought to him with so much trouble. He ordered some of the water poured into a cup, drank it, and, thanking the Arab with a smile, ordered him to be presented with ■ reward.

The courtiers around pressed forward, eager to taste of the wonderful water; but, to the surprise of all, the caliph forbade them to touch even a drop.

After the poor Arab had quitted the royal presence with a light and joyful heart, the caliph turned to his courtiers, and thus explained the motive of his conduct:

"During the travels of the Arab," said he, "the water in this leathern bottle had become impure and distasteful. But it was an offering of love, and as such I have received it with pleasure. But I well knew that, had I suffered another to partake of it, he would not have concealed his disgust; and, therefore, I forbade you to touch the draught, lest the heart of the poor man should have been wounded."

All the sinners can present to their King is like the water brought by the Arab, though, like him, we may fancy it worthy the acceptance of our Lord. But he will not reject, he will not despise the little offering of love and faith; for he has promised that even a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall in no wise lose its reward.

OUR WORK IN LIFE.

"We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." 2 CORINTHIANS VI, 1.

WE are very apt to misunderstand our work here; to despise what seems to us its comparative unimportance, or hardness, or bitterness; to wish it were changed into something that we can imagine that would be pleasanter; and so to waste the time and energies which, rightly applied, would accomplish the hardest task, in ineffectual and childish mourning that it is so hard.

"Working together with God!" *This* is our work here; the doing and suffering of his will—whatever it may be! God is our General. He has a plan for the great campaign of earth. He has a place in that plan for every man. The work of every man is to fill that niche, and perform that task—whatever it may be—which the All-commanding has set down against his name; has indicated for him by his overruling providence.

To do every thing which we are put to the doing of here rightly, promptly, effectually, with all our heart and soul, and mind and strength; to order our daily labor and play, and meat and drink—our study and repose, our words and meditations and volitions—in the constant, and faithful, and affectionate thought of God, and anxiety to please him; to be just such men, women, children, as he wants us to be, meant us to be, needs us to be to complete his great world-plan, and have his kingdom come and his will be done here as it is in heaven—this is our true individual work under the sun!

There is much work done for God on earth—and faithfully done, too—which is never rightly regarded as such by those who do it; so imperfectly do they comprehend God and themselves.

"I am distressed more than for any thing else; it troubles me more than my bodily pain, and my bodily pains are

sometimes exceedingly severe"—said one on a bed of languishment—"because I seem to be kept here after my work is done, to be a mere burden to others. It grieves me inexpressibly to live any longer than I can feel myself able to *do* something for God. His command is to 'work while the day lasts,' and I can work no longer—I am a drone and a burden now."

So groaned that sufferer. He was blind. He did not know what kind of work God sometimes puts men to do; did not discern *why* God was keeping him alive.

He had a nurse, a young man who had been an infidel; was then an infidel; but was an infidel no longer when that sufferer's daily patience and saintly meekness of life, child-like fearlessness of death, and transparent sincerity of spirit, had convinced him of the reality of the religion which aforetime he had despised. So that young man went weeping from the grave of that sufferer to a work of preparation for, and then a work of performance in, the ministry of reconciliation, which in after years was crowned by the salvation of hundreds of souls. So that invalid's greatest work of life—through the strange providence of God—was his last, which he misunderstood and mourned over as not being any work at all; and, like Samson, pulling down the pillars of the temple, in his blindness, he slew more of the enemies of God in his death than they which he had slain in all his life. And so the right endurance of sickness and sorrow is often, and may always be—the most effective *work* for God.

God calls a few men to do some great thing for him, and they are well and fitly employed in the doing of it. But most often the ordinary drudgeries, the dusty commonplace duties of this never-ceasing business of "getting a living"—as we call it in our humble speech of every day—*these* are the work which God appoints for us to do; which he commands and expects us to do *well* for him. Never was there a more dreadful mistake than that which is so often committed, in supposing that there ought to be, or

needs to be, a divorce between religion and common daily living. This is the blunder of the old monks. Well was it rebuked in the legend of him whom the Papists call St. Anthony.

He thought he served God best—in fact, that it was the only real way to do the work of life—by making himself a poor hermit in the desert. One day—the legend runs—as he sat by the side of his hole in the rocks, absorbed in meditation, a voice spoke to him out of the breeze that was blowing by, and said :

“Anthony! thou art not so holy a man as the poor cobbler that is in Alexandria!”

Amazed, Anthony took his staff and started on his journey, his long white beard blowing against his breast as he toiled toward the shore of the Mediterranean. After many days he came to Alexandria, and after long search he found the cobbler’s stall—a narrow place; a little, dried-up, meager man—yet with something bright in his eye, and something sweet even in the wither of his cheeks. Amazed to see so venerable a form as that of Anthony pause before his humble abode, the poor cobbler bowed, and began to tremble before him.

“Tell me,” says Anthony, “how you live. How spend you your time?”

“Verily, sir,” replied the little man, “I have no good works. I am a poor, humble, hard-working cobbler, with little time to think, and no ability to do any great thing. I just live from day to day as God helps me. I am up at the dawn. I pray for the city, my neighbors, my family, myself; I eat my scanty victuals, and then I sit me down to my hard labor all the day, and when the dusk shuts down, I eat, again, the bit I have earned, and thank God, and pray, and sleep. I keep me ever, by God’s help, from all falsehood, and if I make any man a promise, I try to perform it honestly. And so I live, trudging along my narrow path day by day, how dark soever it may sometimes be, never fearing that it will not bring me out, at last, into the everlasting light.”

Then turned away the long-bearded monk, and the voice in the breeze sighed—"Ah, me! that one life of man should be so humbly full, and another so proudly empty!"

This, then, brothers, sisters, all—THIS is the work He has given us to do. This work which is *here*, daily waiting by our hands and thrusting itself upon them. *Not* that which shines so bright over there, and which seems to promise greater pleasantness, as if it would only be one half work and the other half play. *That* is not *our* work! That is an *ignis fatuus*! It is nobody's work; least of all *ours*! *Our* work is real work, hard work, bitter work, dull work, dusty work, perplexing work, unsatisfying work—we may hastily name it—yet after all it is God's work for us. He needs it done. He needs us to do it. We need to do it. And just so sure as we strike down the mattock and the spade deep into the hard soil, with sturdy, steady stroke, so sure will the sweet waters of refreshment spring up even out of those very depths of dryness, to minister and reward and bless.

Let us work, then—with patience and faithful heroism—while the day lasts; seeking, as Christ did, to *finish* the work which is given us to do.



THE CONVERTED ATHEIST.

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." 2 CORINTHIANS V, 17.

THE first time that I met him was at the house of his son-in-law, a gentleman of piety and intelligence. His appearance was that of a decrepit, disconsolate old man. In the course of conversation he unhesitatingly expressed his unbelief of the existence of a God, and his suspicion of the motives of most of those who professed religion. I learned from others that he had ceased in some measure to have intercourse with men—had become misanthropic in his feelings, regarding mankind in the light of a family of sharks, preying upon each other; and his own duty

in such a state of things, he supposed to be, to make all *honest* endeavors to wrest from the grasp of others as much as he could. He used profane language, opposed the temperance reformation, and looked with the deepest hatred upon the ministers of religion. His social affections seemed to be withered, and his body, sympathizing, was distorted and diseased by rheumatic pains.

1. This old man had for years been the subject of special prayer on the part of his pious daughter and his son-in-law; and he was finally persuaded by them to attend a season of religious worship in the Church of which they were members. During these services, which lasted several days, he passed from a state of atheism to a state of faith. The change seemed to surprise every one, and himself as much as any other. From being an atheist, he became the most simple and implicit believer. He seemed like a being who had waked up in another world, the sensations of which were all new to him; and although a man of sense in business affairs, when he began to express his religious ideas, his language seemed strange and incongruous, from the fact that while his soul was now filled with new thoughts and feelings, he had no knowledge of the language by which such thoughts are usually expressed. The effects produced by his conversion were as follows—stated at one time to myself, and upon another occasion to one of the most eminent medical practitioners in this country. One of the first things which he did after his conversion was to love, in a practical manner, his worst enemy. There was one man in the village who had, as he supposed, dealt treacherously with him in some money transactions which had occurred between them. On this account, personal enmity had long existed between the two individuals. When converted, he sought his old enemy—asked his forgiveness, and endeavored to benefit him by bringing him under the influence of the Gospel.

2. His benevolent feelings were awakened and expanded. His first benevolent offering was twenty-five cents, in a

collection for charitable uses. He now gives very liberally, in proportion to his means, to all objects which he thinks will advance the interests of the Gospel of Christ. Besides supporting his own Church and her benevolent institutions, no enterprise of any denomination which he really believes will do good, fails to receive something from him, if he has the means. During the last year he has given more with the design of benefiting his fellow-men than he had done in his whole lifetime before.

3. His affections have received new life. He said to me, in conversation upon the subject, "One part of the Scriptures I feel to be true—that which says, I will take away the hard and stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh. Once I seemed to have no feeling; now, thank God, I can feel. I have buried two wives and six children, but I never shed a tear—I felt hard and unhappy—now my tears flow at the recollection of these things." The tears at that time wet the old man's cheeks. It is not probable that, since his conversion, there has been a single week that he has not shed tears; before conversion he had not wept since the age of manhood. An exhibition of the love of Christ will, at any time, move his feelings with gratitude and love till the tears moisten his eyes.

4. Effect upon his life. Since his conversion he has not ceased to do good as he has had opportunity. Several individuals have been led to repent and believe in Christ through his instrumentality. Some of these were individuals whose former habits rendered a change of character very improbable in the eyes of most individuals. One of them, who had fallen into the habit of intemperance, is now a respectable and happy father of a respectable Christian family. He has been known to go to several families on the same day, pray with them, and invite them to attend religious worship on the Sabbath. And when some difficulty was stated as a hinderance to their attendance, he has assisted them to buy shoes, and granted other little aids of the kind, in order that they might be

induced to attend divine service. When converted, one of his first acts, although he had heard nothing of any such act in others, was to make out a list of all his old associates then living within reach of his influence. For the conversion of these he determined to labor as he had opportunity, and pray daily. On his list were one hundred and sixteen names, among whom were skeptics, drunkards, and other individuals as little likely to be reached by Christian influence as any other men in the region. Within two years from the period of the old man's conversion, one hundred of these individuals had made a profession of religion.

5. Effect upon his happiness. In a social meeting of the Church where he worships, I heard him make such an expression as this: "I have rejoiced but once since I trusted in Christ—that has been all the time." His state of mind may be best described in his own characteristic language. One day he was repairing his fence. An individual passing addressed him, "Mr. —, you are at work all alone." "Not alone," said the old man, "God is with me." He said that his work seemed easy to him, and his peace of mind continued with scarcely an interruption. I saw him at a time when he had just received intelligence that a son, who had gone to the South, had been shot in a personal altercation, in one of the Southern cities. The old man's parental feelings were moved, but he seemed even under this sudden and most distressing affliction to derive strong consolation from trust in God.

6. Physical effects of the moral change. As soon as his moral nature had undergone a change, his body, by sympathy, felt the benign influence. His countenance assumed a milder and more intelligent aspect. He became more tidy in his apparel, and his "thousand pains," in a good measure, left him. In his case, there seemed to be a renovation both of soul and body.

This case is not exaggerated; the old man is living, and there are a thousand living witnesses to this testimony,

among whom is an intelligent physician, who, hearing the old man's history of his feelings, and having known him personally for years, the obvious effects which the faith in Christ had produced in this case, combined with other influences by which he was surrounded, led him seriously to examine the subject of religion as it concerned his own spiritual interest. By this examination he was led to relinquish the system of "rational religion"—as the Socinian system is most inappropriately called by its adherents—and profess his faith in orthodox religion.—*J. B. Walker, D. D.*

THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." GALATIANS VI, 14.

WE are told that if two lutes, of the same form, and tuned exactly in unison, be in the same room, and one be struck into melody, the other, though untouched by mortal minstrelsy, will own a kindred sympathy, and give out soft and gentle murmurs. And what if I should only tell you that something like this takes place—that when Jesus Christ assumed our form, and entered this world, and was smitten for us, there was a mystery in his pangs which should forever cause the sensibilities of human hearts to vibrate, and waken the play of feelings tender and unearthly? What if I should use the idea of an apostle, and say that, in becoming man, Jesus Christ took not on him the *individual* but the *nature*; and that, as by this assumption he finished an atonement sufficient for the whole world, and became in this sense "the Savior of all men," and the sins of all thronged, and crowded, and gathered, and pressed, in crushing and excruciating weight, upon the sufferer, so, by the same union, there goes forth—there is sent back, and abroad, and into men's souls, wherever a crucified Redeemer is preached among them—an efflu-

ence, a sensation, a sympathy, thrilling and irresistible? What if I should only say this?—and the Scripture would bear me out—it were enough.

But, really, all mystery apart, is it strange that the cross is invested with a power to rouse and shake the soul? Strange! is not the marvel this—not that men are moved, but that all are not instantly melted and subdued by it? Why, let men be only men, let them only have pulses that beat and hearts that throb, and this simple announcement, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life”—O, the very thought is colossal, it is overmastering, and language droops under it—tell me, can this be received with coldness and indifference? is it supposable, is it possible? And, then, the amazing consummation—the deed—the deed—the deed—the tragedy of which this earth was the theater, while angels gazed confounded, and the hierarchies of heaven bent from their seats in silent astonishment, and Deity itself, I had almost said, must for once have been absorbed, for once have had all its universal regards and expatiations arrested, and fixed, and concentrated—that deed—that spectacle—can that be viewed with apathy?

What! my brethren, that “the Word was made flesh”—that “the Ancient of days” was cradled as an infant—that he, “by whom and for whom all things were created,” stooped to poverty and shame, are *these* things to be heard and to have no influence? That, for us men and our salvation, “the brightness of the Father’s glory,” he who “thought it no robbery to be equal with God,” emptied himself, and took upon him “the form of a servant,” and terminated upon a gibbet a life of pain, and tears, and blood—O JESUS, IS THIS TRUE? Can I believe *this*, and be unmoved? Can *this* fail to bow my soul, and wipe out every record from my heart, and live there alone, the one, single, all-controlling impression, stamped into the very core, and molding every fiber to itself? Who is surprised

at what a distinguished missionary relates? He was sent among the Indians, and he preached to them, with all his earnestness, of God, his power, his grandeur, and his glory; but they turned away and laughed at him. Why, they had heard far nobler sermons on these subjects than man could utter. They had sat down by day amid the wild pomp of their mountains, and the sublime silence of their forests; and at night had looked up at the pavement of unfading fire above their heads. They had listened to the rushing of the cataract—"deep calling unto deep"—and to the music of the tempest, and the cry of the hurricane. Before their eyes the lightning's fiery flood had rifted the sturdy oak; and hoarse and strong had thundered on beneath them the might of the earthquake. They had heard THESE preach, and they preached of God in tones which mocked the puny articulations of human eloquence. And now, that the white man should come to tell them there is a God, and that this God is great, and powerful, and glorious, . . . they spurned at him in hardness and derision. Baffled in his first effort, the missionary changed his address, and proclaimed a crucified Jesus. He opened his Bible, and read to them those words, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" "God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." Nor did he preach in vain now. The gaze of his audience was at once fastened. They were astonished at the doctrine, and their hearts were at once touched. As the speaker went on with "the faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance," as he led them from scene to scene of the Savior's humiliation and sorrow—from the manger to the garden, and from the garden to the judgment-hall—smothered sobs and murmurs began to be heard, till at last, when he brought them to the cross, and showed them, nailed there, the abused and suffering Son of God, and said, "All this for you—these tears, these groans, this blood for you," the poor savages could refrain no longer; they had stood

all else, but they could not stand this: they exclaimed, "Is this true? Is this true?" and lifted up their voices and wept aloud.

Men call me an enthusiast, but I ask you, is not enthusiasm cold common-sense here? "What a pity," cried the Roman, "that we have but one life for our country!" Which of you but exclaims, what a pity we have not a thousand hearts for such a Savior—a thousand hearts, and every one of them a holocaust, a whole burnt-offering, a sacred conflagration of gratitude and devotion?—*Dr. Fuller.*



UNCERTAIN RICHES.

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God." 1 TIMOTHY VI, 17.

OF all men who have sought for enjoyment in riches, perhaps the late William Beckford, of Fonthill Abbey, England, was the most remarkable. Inheriting a large fortune, he first resided in Portugal, where he lived in a monastery, "the ceiling of which was gilded and painted; the floor spread with Persian carpets of the finest texture; the tables decked with superb ewers and basins of chased silver." "A stream of water flowed through his kitchen, from which were formed reservoirs containing every kind of river fish. On one side were heaped up loads of game and venison; on the other side were vegetables and fruit in endless variety. Beyond a long line of stores extended a row of ovens, and, close to them, hillocks of the finest wheaten flour, rocks of sugar, jars of the purest oil, and pastry in various abundance." The magnificent saloon in which he dined was covered with pictures, and lighted up with a profusion of wax tapers in services of silver, and the banquet usually consisted of rarities and delicacies of every season from distant countries. When in England he pulled down a splendid mansion, erected by his father at a cost of nearly a quarter of a million of money, to build an abbey

whose towers, like the tower of Babel, might reach to heaven. A wall nearly twenty miles in circumference inclosed his mansion and grounds, and so costly were the furnishings of the place that its glories transcended those of Oriental splendor. One who saw the Abbey and grounds says: "Gold and silver vases and cups are so numerous here that they dazzle the eye, and when one looks around at the cabinets, candelabra, and ornaments which decorate the rooms, we almost imagine that we may stand in the treasury of some Oriental prince, whose riches consist in vessels of gold and silver, enriched with precious stones of every sort, from the ruby to the diamond." Such was Beckford, of Fonthill Abbey, with his princely mansion and an income of \$500,000 a year. But was he happy? No. He was wretched, and a reverse of fortune having unexpectedly come upon him, he was driven from his mansion, spent the last of his days in misery, and died, another painful example of the folly of setting the heart on earthly enjoyments, and proving the truth of the wise man's words, "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

William Pitt, son of the great Earl of Chatham, was endowed with the rarest gifts of nature, and at the early age of twenty-four was Prime Minister of England. "The mightiest intellects," says one who knew him well, "bent before him, and the highest offices were in his patronage. Each morning when he arose he was entitled to assert that, in all the vast empire of England, the sun shone on none who was in reality, however he might be in name, more powerful than himself. And yet this great man, during his public career, was always wretched, miserable, unhappy." "He died," says a biographer, "in his forty-seventh year, on the anniversary of the very day on which he had entered Parliament. O, what a difference there was between the buoyant youth of twenty and the care-worn statesman of forty-seven! Before the eyes of the one sparkled a long vista of political enjoyments and honors; before the eyes

of the other were the anxieties and cares which had attended them when grasped. He had followed as his object in life unsanctified ambition, and he found it vanity and vexation of spirit," "and died," says Wilberforce, "of a broken heart."

Robert Clive was a mercantile clerk in India. He had a passion for the life of a soldier, and obtained an ensigncy in the army in the East. Here he rose till he became the conqueror of India, and had the treasures of the East poured at his feet. "The whole kingdom," wrote his father to him, "is in transports at the glory and success you have gained: come away, and let us rejoice together." He returned, was impeached by the House of Commons, and was so chagrined and disappointed that he took his own life.



TRANSFORMING POWER OF CHRISTIANITY.

"As touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." 1 THESS. IV, 9.

"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." COLOSSIANS III, 12.

CHRISTIANITY has done more toward transforming the world than all the sages of Greece and Rome. The old world did not so much as profess to possess any fundamental principle of morals at all, and such of its conceptions upon social matters as did not flow from the despotism of the State may be characterized as dictated by individual selfishness more or less enlightened by experience. Thus Plutarch testifies that the idea of such a thing as friendship was looked upon as chimerical by his cotemporaries, a figment of the old heroic ages: the very children of the same parents did not care for each other. Cicero, too, gives it as the general rule, that men sought to have friends from motives of interest, and not from affection; and both witnesses are fully borne out by the history of the times, especially

by the utter heartlessness of public men during the political proscriptions. Even the Stoics taught that every movement of affection, pity, or sympathy, should be avoided as so much weakness, and that the forgiveness of injuries was a mark of pusillanimity; or, as the founder of the school pithily expressed it, "No wise man ever bestows either alms or pardon."

From Plato to Cicero, and including these great men themselves, no virtues were ever held up to view but those which should distinguish the citizen—wisdom, justice, courage, moderation, decorum. The best moralists contented themselves with generalizing certain facts of experience, without trying to stand above them, or to raise men to a higher moral level than the one they occupied.

The hard abstract conception of the State and its claims was the substitute for a definite moral system in this old world. The State, as in modern socialist theories, absorbed all the energies of its citizens, and was all contempt or cruelty for those at whose hands it could not expect direct services. The prosperity of the State was the ultimate end of existence, and individual rights were only recognized or respected so far as they were supposed to serve that end. Plato and Aristotle both defend the practice of exposing weak or deformed children; and if they allow the poor to marry, it is with the reservation that the State must not be at the expense of bringing up large families: so they coolly advise parents whose means are insufficient to practice abortion largely. Plato will not allow people to trouble themselves about the poor when they are ill; it is the best economy to let them die off; and in this he was but the interpreter of the spirit of his age. *There is not a solitary precept of beneficence in any moralist before the Christian era.* There existed, indeed, temples of Æsculapius, but even there sufferers found certain magical formulas rather than real relief.

The ancient Republics, even those that called themselves democracies, were practically oppressive aristocracies, where

a privileged class held their fellows in a state of hopeless dependence. Labor was looked upon as a disgrace, with the single exception of that which was consecrated to the fine arts: even intellectual labor, such as the education of youth, was left to slaves. The character of citizen, says Aristotle, only belongs properly to those who have not to work for their living; there is no virtue in mercenary labor; and they who have to subsist by such means are incapable of greatness of soul. So in the ideal Republic of Plato the statesmen and warriors are to be supported by the unrequited toil of the agriculturists and artisans. The latter are not even honored with an exhortation to aspire at least to moral excellence; doomed to inferiority and insignificance, they are insultingly told it is not much matter into what vices they may fall; but those citizens who occupy themselves with public affairs, and are guardians of law, the Republic expects that *they* will be virtuous. How deeply-rooted must have been this prejudice when we can see that even Socrates was influenced by it!

When the free working man was despised, what must have been the condition of the slave? He is born to be sold and worked, thought both Plato and Aristotle; and the latter, being given to definitions, finds this difference between a slave and an inanimate object, that he is an instrument with a soul, but not a soul of the same nature as the master's; and he adds, with a tone of authority, that no master can be reasonably asked to love his slave. The reader may remember how Lucian rallied the early Christians because their Lawgiver had told them to love one another as brethren. "How can men love slaves," he asks, "for whom even the gods don't concern themselves?" Even the Emperor Julian, at a time when opinion had already been wonderfully changed, continued to reproach the Galileans with their doctrine of the natural equality of men.

The practical illustration of such ideas was the master's power of life and death over his slave; the porter chained

to the door-post, and sold along with the house ; the putting to death of the whole establishment, no matter to how many hundreds of human beings it amounted, if the master were assassinated ; the putting aged slaves *out of pain* when their work was no longer worth the expense of feeding them. An island in the Tiber was formally set apart for the exposure of aged and infirm slaves, and Cato availed himself of the provident institution ! And then the multitudes “butchered to make a Roman holiday.” The transition is natural from letting your dependents starve through economy to making them kill each other for your amusement. Cicero himself gave the people shows of gladiators ; and he passes in his own eyes for a great reformer, when he timidly suggests that criminals alone ought to be forced to shed each other’s blood for the pleasure of the public. To vary the spectacle, Domitian exhibited a combat of female gladiators.

The family was formed in the interest of the State, and woman only valued as a means of bringing children into the world. Aristotle teaches very seriously, that if woman be capable of virtue, it can only be that of a slave. At Athens the law made women, married, unmarried, or widows, perpetual minors. “Is there any one with whom thou speakest less than with thy wife ?” Socrates is made to say to Critobulus, as one of those universal facts that can be predicated of any man. A respectful, chaste, disinterested affection between man and wife, that should survive old age and all vicissitudes, till death do them separate, such an idea never presented itself to the imagination in classical antiquity, still less was it realized in practice. The mother brought children into the world, but she had nothing to do with their education : the mother of the Gracchi was a prodigy because she took some interest in that of her sons, but *no ancient writer ever speaks of maternal duties*. The less woman was respected, the more she was exposed to be perverted. In imperial Rome matrons of the highest rank got themselves inscribed among the public *meretrices*,

that they might not be exposed to legal prosecution for the lives they were leading. The only culture within their reach was that of the courtesan. What must the men have been? We may form some idea from the tone of the theater throughout the duration of the empire; or from the obscene paintings upon vases and upon the walls of private houses, such as fill the Phallic chamber in the Museum of Naples; or from the fact that the houses of the *scorta virilia* in Rome were public, and paid the same tax as those of the other sex. Up to the latest hours of paganism the capitol of Rome was sullied at once by the annual human sacrifice, and by the presence of the priestesses of Venus. "What a state of society was that," exclaims Professor Schmidt, "which could tolerate orgies in which the wine of the masters, as they reeled about crowned with flowers, mingled itself with the blood of the slaves; in which deadly combats alternated with immodest pantomimes, and one offered one's guests successively the grimaces of buffoons, the carnage of gladiators, and the kisses of courtesans; a state in which to sum up all in one word, the most monstrous cruelty was joined to the most shameless libertinage!"

When Tacitus sorrowed over the way in which the Romans had degenerated from the austere civic virtues of their ancestors, it was with a gloomy submission to destiny, and with utter hopelessness of better things. And, in one sense, he was right; here was no saving—no remedial—principle known to him; the cold proud grandeur of pagan society had neither stimulant nor protection for the weak, nor consolation for the wretched, nor restraint for the wicked. In its best days, the days of its heroes and thinkers, it showed to what man unaided could attain, and then—decayed and perished.

Now, what was the kind and the extent of the revolution brought about by Christianity? It was the communication of a new spirit to mankind. The religion of redemption taught the rich to respect the poor, and the poor to respect themselves, exhibited a perfect type of purity and charity,

brought home to the conscience the Divine grandeur of forgiveness and self-sacrificing love. "It gave an answer to those two questions which the old world had never attempted to resolve: 'What is truth?' and, 'Who is my neighbor?'" Those great principles that antiquity had never known—the natural equality of men, and respect for individual liberty—were taught, and, what is better, were practiced in Christian society; so that Epiphanius could boast, without fear of contradiction, that humanity and charity were the fruits and the marks of the Church, and Tertullian could say that the world was becoming one Republic.

For the old ideal of the abstract despotic State there was substituted that of a kingdom of God, of which men became members by free accession, and in which no distinction was recognized between native and stranger, freeman and slave, male and female, rich and poor, strong and weak; all were one in Christ Jesus; all knew that their Master had said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." The poor, the infirm, the wretched were no longer abandoned as useless to society, but became the objects of the warmest sympathy and solicitude. The exposure of children and the crime of abortion were looked upon with horror among Christians long before they were punished by authority. Hospitals were erected for the first time, asylums for the infirm, houses to lodge and help the indigent traveler. "The pagans care not for the hungry or the thirsty," complains Ignatius; but the accusation could not be retorted; for the Emperor Julian said it was a shame for the votaries of his religion that their poor were maintained by the liberality of the Christians. They did more than feed the hungry or clothe the naked. Clement of Rome says, "We know many among us who have sold themselves into slavery, that others might recover their liberty." The very barbarian was no longer a natural enemy, and he, too, was redeemed by the untiring charity of the Christians.

The artisan was no longer despised and his labor reck-

oned dishonorable. The great apostle had said, if any man would not work, neither should he eat. He had gone farther still: "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands at some useful occupation, that he may have to give to him that needeth;" and he had set the example of working with his own hands.

The proclamation of equality before God necessarily brought about a modification of the whole order of society, voluntarily and progressively. The family was now constituted upon a new basis—respect for the claims and the interests of immortal souls. Woman was no longer the mere instrument of man's pleasures, but his equal; and a new world was opened to her ministry of tenderness and consolation. She visited the sick and the prisoners, dressed the wounds of those that had been tortured, prayed with the martyrs who awaited their doom. She educated her own children, instead of handing them over to slaves. Marriage was now no longer a purely-civil or political institution, but a union of souls, sanctified for their moral progress, ennobled by prayer and mutual counsel. The child was no longer a chattel, the property of his father, but a precious charge, intrusted to his parents to be brought up for the kingdom of God.

SCOTT AND CAMPBELL.

"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity." ECCLESIASTES I, 2.

NEVER, perhaps, in any period of the world's history did literary talent receive a homage so universal as that of Sir Walter Scott. His reputation was coextensive not only with the English language, but with the boundaries of civilization. In one year, too, his literary productions yielded him \$75,000. The king conferred on him a baronetcy, and wherever he appeared, at home or abroad, he was the lion of the day. All the good things of life were his. His

mansion at Abbotsford realized the highest conceptions of a poet's imagination, and seemed like a "poem in stone." His company was of the most honorable of the land, and his domestic enjoyments all that his heart could desire. Yet he was not happy. Ambitious to found a family, he got into debt, and in old age he was a ruined man. When about to leave Abbotsford for the last time, he said: "When I think of what this place now is, with what it was not long ago, I feel as if my heart would break. Lonely, aged, deprived of all my family, I am an impoverished and embarrassed man." At another time he writes: "Death has closed the dark avenue of love and friendships. I look at them as through the grated door of a burial-place filled with the monuments of those who once were dear to me, and with no other wish than that it may open for me at no distant period." And again: "Some new objection or complaint comes every moment. Sickesses come thicker and thicker; friends are fewer and fewer. The recollections of youth, health, and powers of activity, neither improved nor enjoyed, is a poor ground of comfort. The best is, the long halt will arrive at length and close all." And the long halt did arrive. Not long before he died, Sir Walter Scott requested his daughter to wheel him to his desk. She then put a pen into his hand, but his fingers refused to do their office. Silent tears rolled down his cheeks. "Take me back to my own room," he said; "there is no rest for Sir Walter but in his grave." A few days after this he died, realizing in reference to all his fame, honor, and renown, the truth of Solomon, "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity."

Campbell, the author of the "Pleasures of Hope," in his old age wrote: "I am alone in the world. My wife and the child of my hopes are dead; my surviving child is consigned to a living tomb—a lunatic asylum; my old friends, brothers, sisters, are dead, all but one, and she, too, is dying; my last hopes are blighted. As for fame, it is a

bubble that must soon burst. Earned for others, shared with others, it was sweet; but at my age, to my own solitary experience, it is bitter. Left in my chamber alone by myself, is it wonderful my philosophy at times takes flight; that I rush into company; resort to that which blunts, but heals no pang; and then, sick of the world, and dissatisfied with myself, shrink back into solitude?" And in this state of mind he died.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the great orator, made an almost similar confession. He perished in wretchedness and want. His last words were: "I am absolutely undone."

GOD PREPARES THE WAY OF DEATH.

"Surely the bitterness of death is past." 1 SAMUEL XV, 32.

By sorrow and old age our Maker prepares oftentimes the mind for the great change. When death comes into the house purely-human comforts are blasted, and turn with blackened face upon him who puts in them his trust. It is otherwise with religion, for then even the smoky chimney wall becomes the panel on which are spread pictures which, be they myths or not, are fraught with the greatest loveliness and peace. It is under such influences, and in such scenery, that we best see the sweetness of the preparation by which the believer is made fit for death. Long illness, which, in our blindness, we can not explain, but which tones the mind for the awful moment; old age, cutting away cord after cord binding the present to the past; affliction and sorrow, so subtly dividing the very sinews of the heart; the removal of objects of love to that home above where the eye of the dying man sees a treasure dearer than all below—these things come to take from the parting moment nearly all its terror. For, says Lord Bacon, "death comes graciously to those who sit in darkness, or lie heavily burdened with grief and irons—to desolate widows, pensive prisoners, and deposed kings: to all

such death is a redeemer, and the grave a place of retirement and rest." Or, as the same idea is expressed by a late thoughtful writer :

"I am footsore and very weary,
But I travel to meet a friend.
The way is long and dreary,
But I know that it soon must end.

He is traveling fast like the whirlwind,
And though I creep slowly on,
We are drawing nearer, nearer,
And the journey is almost done!

Through the heat of many Summers,
Through many a Spring-time rain,
Through long Autumns and weary Winters
I have hoped to meet him, in vain.

On the day of my birth he plighted
His kingly word to me:
I have seen him in dreams so often,
That I know what his smile must be.

I have toiled through the sunny woodland,
Through fields that basked in the light,
And through the lone paths in the forest
I crept in the dead of night.

I will not fear at his coming,
Although I must meet him alone;
He will look in my eyes so gently,
And take my hand in his own.

Like a dream all my toil will vanish,
When I lay my head on his breast;
But the journey is very weary,
And he only can give me rest!"

Add to this a Christian hope, be it really true or be it not—view this hope as a mere temporal alleviator—and then see how still more the path brightens. And, in this view, take the following lines, not as Christian poetry, but as the type of a psychological phenomenon, and compare them with the expression, beautiful as that expression is, of merely the stoical submission which has been just described. They were written by one whose heart felt the meaning of

each line, and each word in the lines; but, all this aside, is there not a richness in the feeling and the thought?

“One sweetly-solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er—
I'm nearer home to-day
Than I ever have been before;
Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the jasper sea;
Nearer the bound of life,
Where we lay our burdens down;
Nearer leaving the cross,
Nearer gaining the crown.”

In this connection observe the goodness of Providence in withholding from us the specific hour of our death. What would be the effect of an announcement of the period in which death is to occur, we may determine from a consideration of those cases in which such announcement was really supposed to be made. “The *apprehension*,” says Mr. Dendy, in his “Philosophy of Mystery,” “of a misfortune or fatality may prove its cause.” Of this we have an illustration given in the case of Glaphyra, mentioned by Josephus, who believing herself warned by the specter of a deceased husband of approaching death, gradually, as if in obedience to the command, prepared herself to die. Lord Lyttleton's death, now attributed to suicide after a similar supposed supernatural warning, brings us to the same conclusion. Take also the following case, which occurred some years ago in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. The cholera was at that time raging in the city, and a farmer in excellent health, by way of a practical joke, was accosted by a series of medical students, each with the information that he was showing symptoms of the epidemic. “You certainly ought to be careful.” “You have the marks of the incipient disease.” “Pardon me for interrupting you, but you ought at once to go home, and take immediate advice.” The man went home, and was

seized with the Asiatic cholera in its most unequivocal shape. To the same effect is the result of an experiment said to have been tried by Frederick William III, of Prussia. Six persons condemned to death were by royal permission selected as the objects of a medical experiment as to the contagiousness of cholera. Three of them were placed in beds of persons who had died of disease, but without notice of the fact; three others were informed that they would be so exposed, but were placed in beds with no such supposed infection. Those who had warning were all attacked with the disease, and one of them, at least, fatally; the others escaped. Of a similar character are the cases, which are not rare, of persons who, in undergoing a mock execution, have really died of fright. And the only instances that Scripture gives us of a prophetic intimation of the time of death, are those of Saul and Sapphira; and in these the effect was instantaneous. Saul, when he heard he was to be slain in the approaching battle, was "sore afraid," and fell paralyzed to the ground. And though the fate of Sapphira was the result of a direct Divine command, yet the accompaniment of the mere announcement of this command was immediate death.

Even were a destruction of the vital powers not to follow, there would be in almost every case a suspension of the nervous energies. The internal improvements of New York would scarcely have received from De Witt Clinton the powerful impulse that inaugurated them, had that capable and indefatigable statesman known that he was to be taken from the work almost in early manhood—that the energies spent on it would, by his premature death, be unrequited, either to his family or himself, and that he was to be laying the corner-stone of those whom he regarded as his political adversaries.

On home this knowledge of the future would fall with a double oppressiveness. No man can deny this who, to take the suggestion of a recent impressive writer, looks back upon his greatest personal sorrow, and inquires what

would have been the effect had he all along known of its approach. The young child, who gives so much of the purest peace to its parents—what would their feelings be if they were to see before them, from its very birth, the little waxen form stretched in its early coffin? The wife, whose comfort and pride it is to throw the delights of home around her husband—how would her heart sink within her, and her hand fail, if in the center of that home, in the decorating and refining of which for another's sake she had bestowed so much care, she were to see that other stretched on the bier, with his hands folded over his breast, and his face bound in the bandages of death? Would the mansion, whose erection has employed so much labor or has evolved and perpetuated so much architectural taste—would it have reared its marble front, had its owner known that the first pageantry it was to witness was to be that of his own death? Who would keep up the light of hope in the heart or the preparations of welcome in the home, if months or years in advance the wreck of the ship were seen in all its sublime horror? As it is, life lifts an unpenetrable screen before the grave, hiding the path of approach. It is thus we have freedom to hope, energy to undertake, calmness to execute.—*Professor Francis Wharton.*

WILLING FORTUNES TO CHILDREN.

"Their inheritance is turned to strangers, and their houses to aliens."
LAMENTATIONS V, 2.

A VERY wealthy man, who had willed to one of his sons the principal part of a thrifty village bearing this son's name, was lamenting the dissolute habits of that son, and being informed of the ruin of another young man who had a short time previously received a very large fortune, asked the writer, "How he could account for the fact, that so many children of rich parents lacked mental, moral, and physical energy, and frequently became bankrupts."

The fact may be readily accounted for by every observer of men and things. A young man left in circumstances which the vocabulary of the worldling denominates "*independent*," has little stimulus to prompt him to cultivate his physical or intellectual powers. Many of the most depraved passions of fallen nature are pampered; time lies heavily on his hands, he wanders from one scene of folly and amusement to another, his vicious habits are strengthened, his faculties benumbed, and he soon becomes a fit subject to be operated upon by the saloon tender, the licentious, and the gambler. Swarms of these are on the alert for such cases, thoroughly practiced in the art of fleecing them. Temporal embarrassment begins to creep into their affairs, then carnal enjoyments are interrupted, irritability or despondency gets possession of their minds. Trace such characters onward a little farther, and you will probably find them disconsolate bankrupts.

A Church member whose name and standing was known afar, not many years ago devised to each one of his children *sixty thousand dollars*. Within five years, one of these sons, who was reduced to circumstances requiring assistance, said to a friend who had extended to him some aid, "If father had not left me five dollars, and made me a business man, it would have been much better for me."

The testimony of a Postmaster-General of the United States is impressive touching the point under consideration. He says: "I remember the first time I visited Burlington, as Judge of the Supreme Court. I had left the place many years before, a poor boy. At the time I left, there were two families of special note for their standing and wealth. Each of them had a son about my own age. I was very poor, and these two boys were very rich. During the long years of hard toil which passed before my return, I had almost forgotten them—they had long ago forgotten me.

Approaching the court-house for the first time, in company with several gentlemen of the bench and of the bar, I noticed in the court-yard a large pile of old furniture, about

to be sold at vendue. The scenes of early boyhood with which I was now surrounded, prompted to ask whose it was. I was told it belonged to Mr. ——. I remember a family of that name, very wealthy—there was a son, too; can it be ——? I was told it was even so; the son of one of the families alluded to. He had inherited more than I had ever earned, and spent it all; and now his family were reduced to real want, and his very furniture was that day to be sold for debt. I went into the court-room suddenly, yet almost glad that I was born poor. I was soon absorbed in the business before me. One of the first cases called up was that of —— *vs.* ——, a case that came up on appeal, but which, if we remember rightly, originated in a low drunken quarrel. Mr. ——, thought I, that is a familiar name. Can it be ——? In short, I found that it was the son of the other wealthy family! I was overwhelmed with astonishment and thanksgiving—astonishment at the change in our relative standings, and thanksgiving that I was not born to inherit wealth without toil. Indeed, *all my experience* has taught me, that those fathers provide best for their children, who leave them with the highest education, the purest morals, and the least money.”—*Rev. J. Ashworth.*

REPRODUCTION IN KIND.

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” GALATIANS VI, 6.

A PLANT or a tree never forgets itself. Cheat it of its root, and the stem remains faithful. The minutest twig, put out to nurse upon the arm of a foreign mother, feels the thrill of the great primal law in its filmiest fiber, and breathes in every expression of its life its fidelity. If you will walk with me into the garden, I will show you a mountain-ash in full bloom; but on the top of it you will see a strange little cluster of pear-blossoms. A twig from a Seckel pear-tree was, two or three years since, ingrafted there. It had a hard time in uniting its being to that of the

alien ash, but it loved life, and so, at length, it consented to join itself to the transplanted forest tree. It was weak and alone, but it kept its law. Spring bathed the ash with its own peculiar bloom, and Autumn hung it with its clusters of scarlet berries, and it was hidden from sight by the redundant foliage, but it kept its law. The roots of the mountain-ash, blindly reaching in the ground and imbibing its juices, knew nothing of the little orphaned twig above, that waited for its food; but they could not cheat it of its law. Up to a certain point of a certain bough the rising fluids came under the law of the mountain-ash, and there they found a gateway, guarded by an angel that gave them a new commandment. "Thus far—mountain-ash: beyond—Seckel pear;" and if, in October, you will walk in the garden again with me, I will show you among the scarlet berries, bending heavily toward you, the clustered succulence of the Seckel.

A seedsman may cheat you, but a seed never does. If you plant corn, it never comes up potatoes. If you sow wheat, it never comes up rye. Wrapped up in every capsule, bound up in every kernel, packed into every minutest germ, is this law, written by God at the beginning, "Produce thou after thy kind." So the whole living world goes on producing after its kind. Year after year we visit the seedsman, and read the labels on his drawers and packages, and bear home and plant in our gardens the little homely germs that keep God's law so well; and Summer rewards our trust in them with beautiful flowers, and Autumn with bountiful fruition. Robins sang the same song to the Pilgrim Fathers that they sing to us. The May-flower breathes the same fragrance now that it breathed in the fingers of Rose Standish; and man and woman, producing after their kind, are the same to-day that they were three thousand years ago.

Now, there is a significance in all the laws of material life, above and beyond their special office. They do the work they were set to do; they rule the life they were

appointed to rule; but the laws, themselves, belong to a family whose branches run through all intellectual, moral, and spiritual life. Laws live in groups no less uniformly than the existences which they inform and govern. It is a law, both of animal and vegetable structures, that they shall grow by what they feed on; but this law passes the bounds of matter, and finds its widest meaning and its most extended application beyond. The mind grows by what it feeds on; the heart grows by what it feeds on; love, hate, jealousy, revenge, fortitude, courage, grow by what they feed on; spirituality grows by what spirituality feeds on. Wherever growth goes, through all the realm of God, this law goes; and the law that every thing that produces shall produce after its kind, is just as universal as this.

I call my child to my knee in anger; I strike him a hasty blow that carries with it the peculiar sting of anger; I speak a loud reproof that bears with it the spirit of anger; and I look in vain for any relenting in his flashing eyes, flushed face, and compressed lips. I have made my child angry, and my uncontrolled passion has produced after its kind. I have sown anger, and I have reaped anger instantaneously. Perhaps I become still more angry, in consequence of the passion manifested by my child, and I speak and strike again. He is weak and I am strong; but, though he bow his head, crushed into silence, I may be sure that there is a sullen heart in the little bosom, and anger the more bitter because it is impotent. I put the child away from me, and think of what I have done. I am full of relentings. I long to ask his pardon, for I know that I have offended and deeply injured one of Christ's little ones. I call him to me again, press his head to my breast, kiss him, and weep. No word is spoken, but the little bosom heaves, the little heart softens, the little eyes grow tenderly penitent, the little hands come up and clasp my neck, and my relentings and my sorrow have produced after their kind. The child is conquered, and so am I.

If I utter fretful words, they come back to me like echoes.

If I bristle all over with irritability, the quills will begin to rise all about me. One thoroughly-irritable person in a breakfast-room spoils coffee and toast, sours milk and destroys appetite for a whole family. He produces after his kind.

We are in the habit of hearing that the children of a certain neighborhood, or school, or town, are extraordinarily bad children. Great wonder is sometimes expressed in regard to such instances, when, really, they are not wonderful at all. When children are unusually bad, parents are unusually bad, or, if they are not bad-hearted, they are wrong-headed. I ought, perhaps, to say here that I have known an irascible, tyrannical, unjust, and cruel school-teacher to spoil a neighborhood of children, when the parents were without any special fault, save that of failing to thrust him out of the charge which he had abused. But usually the fault is at home. If the seed planted there be good, it will produce good fruit. Yet my reader will say that the best man he ever knew had the worst children he ever saw. The truth of the statement is admitted, but what do you know of the home-life of that family? How much unreasonable restraint has been exercised upon those children? From how many exhibitions of stern and unrelenting injustice have these children suffered? What laxity of discipline and carelessness of culture have reigned in that family? I know many who seem to be excellent men in society, but who are any thing but amiable men at home. In one they are pleasant, affable, kind, and charitable; in the other, cross-grained, hard, unkind, and unjust. I declare with all positiveness, that when a family or a neighborhood of children is bad, there is a reason for it outside of the children. There are bad influences which descend upon them, and work out their natural results in them.

It is astonishing to see how long a seed will lie in the ground without germinating, and how true it will remain to its kind through untold years. Cut down a pine forest, where

an oak has not been seen for a century, and oak shrubbery will spring up. Heave out upon the surface a pile of earth that has lain hidden from the eyes of a dozen generations, and forthwith it will grow green with weeds. Plow up the prairie, and turn under the grass and flowers that have grown there since the white settler can remember, and there will spring from the inverted sod a strange growth that has had no representative in the sunlight for long ages. Soul and soil are alike in this. I once heard a man say of his father, who had been dead many years—"I hate him: I hate his memory." The words were spoken bitterly, with a flushed face and angry eyes, yet he who spoke them was one of the kindest and most placable of men. Deep down in his heart, under love for his mother which was almost worship, and under affection for wife, children, and sisters which was as deep as his nature, and under multiplied friendships, there had been planted this seed. The father had treated the boy harshly and unjustly; and the young soul was stung as the tender fruit is stung by an insect. Where anger and resentment were sown, anger and resentment were ready to spring up the moment the seed was uncovered. I have known men to carry through life a revenge planted in their hearts by some unjust and cruel schoolmaster. How many men are there in the world who have sworn to revenge themselves upon one who had stung them with anger or injustice when in childhood!

So we come to the grand lesson, that if we would have good children, we must ourselves be exactly what we would have them become; if we would govern our families, we must first govern ourselves; if we would have only pleasant words greet our ears in the home circle, we must speak only pleasant words. We should see to it that we plant nothing, the legitimate fruits of which we shall not be willing and glad to see borne in the lives of our children. If our children are bad, the fault is, ninety-nine cases in a hundred, our own, in some way. If we would reform society, or make it better in any respect, our quickest way to do it is

to reform and make ourselves better. If I would reap courtesy, and hospitality, and kindness, and love, I must plant them; and it is the sum of all arrogance to assume that I have a right to reap them without planting them. A man who receives courtesy without exercising it, reaps that which he has not sown. He is a thief, and ought in justice to be kicked out of society. Blessings on the man who sows the seeds of a happy nature and a noble character broadcast wherever his feet wander—who has a smile alike for joy and sorrow, a tender word always for a child, a compassionate utterance for suffering, courtesy for friends and for strangers, encouragement for the despairing, an open heart for all—love for all—good words for all! Such seed produces after its kind in all soils, when it finds lodgment; and that which the sower fails to reap, passes into hands that are grateful for the largess.—*Dr. Holland.*

LONGING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." MATTHEW V, 6.

NOTHING could more emphatically express the peculiar character of man—a creature who needs to be filled, needs something that will satisfy—a being of an immortal, limitless nature. It is a great thing sometimes in this world, when you are going to make a present to a person, to know what will exactly suit that person's tastes or wants. A toy that will delight a little child, will not please one who is older. That which will please this kind of a man, will not suit that. To get the exact thing, therefore, that will satisfy the peculiar taste or want of a person, constitutes the great value of a gift, rather than its cost. Now, Jesus Christ knows, when he makes the promise, exactly what man wants. Man wants to be filled; he wants something that will satisfy. Man's peculiarity above all other beings is this ever-restless seeking after something. Not only the

wicked are like the troubled sea that can not rest, but humanity itself is in some respects like it. A great deal of the glory of man comes out of this restlessness. He can not be content with the present condition.

The writer of the book of Ecclesiastes went all through with the world in some of its evil, as well as its better phases, perhaps. He had every thing it could give. I do not believe that, in our age of railroads and telegraphs, we have more means of worldly enjoyment than Solomon had, or he who speaks for him—the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes—and after going all through with it, in the end he was compelled to say, not with any morbid pharisaic disposition, but as the result of a higher spirit, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” It could not satisfy, it could not fill him. There are moments when every man feels it; there are moments when that which is immortal in his nature will assert itself, and that which gravitates to higher things will make itself known. Something is taken from us—sometimes a thing that is familiar and dear to us. Then we feel that all this world’s good is insufficient to make up its loss. Take away the health of a man who has all his days been permitted to have the regular beat of his pulse, the kindly glow of his blood, the free and full respiration of his lungs, and let some little muscle be paralyzed, or some pain settle within him, and what is the good of all this world? Unless he can go within himself, and there find resources, how is it all darkened, and rendered terrible!

A dear friend, a child, is taken away. All things else become valueless or secondary. Sometimes this is a morbid state, but we feel as if it were true. It is a great lesson, teaching us that this world is not the highest good, when a bereavement of that kind will make all other things secondary.

I was much struck in reading about a nobleman who died a few days since. He had an iron safe, or chest, all locked up, but marked with these words: “*To be re-*

moved first, in case of fire." When he died, his friends opened that chest, supposing, of course, that some valuable document, or deed of property, rich jewelry, or costly plate, would be found in it. But what did they find? They found the toys of his little child, who had gone before him. Richer to him they were than all the world's wealth, richer than his coronet; brighter than all the jewels that sparkled on its crest. Not his estate, not his jewels, not his equipage, nothing glorious and great in this world; but the dearest objects to him were the toys of his little child.

Worldly good is secondary—it can not satisfy. So it is with intellectual attainment. From its very nature it gives us no rest, and was not meant to give it. It is the glory of the intellect that it is always panting and longing for some higher thing; always wanting to soar; always seeking to gain some more lofty eminence. "Excelsior" is the continual watchword of the intellect, and it was meant to be so. It is its very essence and power that we can not rest contented with present attainment. But then there are times when we are not all intellect. There never was a man all intellect, but just in proportion as men become so, they become like those higher mountains of the earth—all ice and snow as they rise above the warm heart of the earth. But man is not all intellect. He has feeling; he has times of weakness. Though he may solve great mathematical problems, he suffers, he pines, he needs help and sympathy; for all the truth that is gathered in the bright realms of intellect do not satisfy. There is only one thing that will, and Jesus Christ saw it.

You remember the story of the old man who had forgotten the names of his children, and the names of his early friends, long buried and slumbering in the churchyard. They tried to arouse him, and awaken his recollection by some association, to bring to him the life to which he clung like an old leaf in the early Winter. They mentioned name after name, but to no effect, till that of

Jesus Christ was mentioned, when he said, "Yes, I remember that name."

Thank God, you can hunger and thirst after righteousness. If you are driving a nail, planing a board, selling a piece of cloth, doing any kind of work, hunger and thirst after righteousness. In all that you are doing, hunger and thirst after righteousness. O, what a blessed thing is that! And remember there is no warrant that we shall have any thing else than this in this world. You have no assurance of life, happiness, health, or reputation; but you may be sure you shall have goodness if you seek it. It is true in one sense, as one has well said, that whatever we would have, we can take if we pay for it—good or evil. There is a law of that kind: "Seek and ye shall find." We can have it, but we must pay for it. You can have pleasure, but you must pay for it in a wasted life, a ruined or impaired nature. You can have wealth, but you must pay for it, perhaps in honorable, drudging service, or, as many have paid for it, in a blasted reputation. But you are not sure even in regard to these things. It is by no means certain when you have your wealth or reputation, that you will enjoy it. Something may come in to prevent it. But there is one thing certain—one thing which can not fail you, but can give you unending and inalienable joy. In Christ's words you hear what it is, and all men who have responded to those words in holy effort, corroborate what he has said—"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—*E. H. Chapin.*

ANCHORED TO THE BERG.

"The righteous shall hold on his way." JOB XVII, 9.

IN the second Grinnell Expedition to the Arctic Ocean, the last few days of the northward voyage of the "Advance," before she made her harbor for the Winter, were days of extreme peril from drifting ice. The "pack," which consists

of floating ice driven together in large masses, was fast becoming consolidated by the newly-formed ice of the cold August nights. The "floes," or detached portions of these great ice-fields, were running furiously with the tides. The shore-ice was too rotten to allow the men to drag the brig along its margin by tacking; and the only resource was to take advantage of the "leads," or navigable openings in the ice, when wind and the tide favored, and by boring through the floe from one lead to another. Sometimes, however, just as the stanch little vessel had entered a lead, it would suddenly become entangled in the drifting floe, or a huge pack would bear down upon it with ominous grinding. Then all the vigilance, experience, courage, and decision of the commander were put to the test.

In his former voyage, Dr. Kane had observed that since the greater bulk of an iceberg is below the water-line, "the depth to which these bergs sink when floating subjects them to the action of the deeper sea-currents, while their broad surface above the water is, of course, acted on by the wind. It happens, therefore, that they are found not unfrequently moving in different directions from the floes around them, and preventing them for a time from freezing into a united mass."

In a critical moment this experience of the commander saved the vessel and her gallant crew. The floes were drifting mightily to the south, dragging the entangled vessel with them. Huge masses of ice threatened to engulf her. Suddenly a berg came driving up *from* the south, and as it moved majestically through the drift, the brig was made fast to its huge bulk by well-fitted anchors. On moved this strange ship of the Arctic, plowing up the furrows of that icy sea, till it came to anchor in an open pool beside a lofty cape, having borne the brig against the running ice, full ten miles toward the pole. There it became a shelter from the storm that it had faced; and when at length the fierce gale swept against the vessel a floe twenty feet in thickness, the smooth slope of the iceberg served as an

inclined plane, up which the brig was driven, "as if some great steam screw-power had forced her into a dry-dock." When the pulses of ice and storm subsided, the vessel lay in the gigantic embrace of the berg that had buckled her to its side, and had borne her on her poleward course against wind, ice, and wave.

Even so is it in the voyage of life poleward—heavenward. Ofttimes amid the darkness and the storm, our frail bark encounters the drifting floes of worldly schemes that would drag it hopelessly from its haven. Ofttimes it is well-nigh borne down by the accumulated pack of worldly tempers and worldly foes, that rush tumultuously upon it. But grappling to some huge berg of principle that feels the deeper currents of the sea, and catches the winds of the upper ether, it is borne along secure and triumphant toward the pole of its faith. And when the gale is fierce, and its foes crowd hard upon it, our bark but makes its pilot-principle itself the harbor of its refuge, the rock of its defense. Principle moves ever forward with unchanging majesty, though all around, with noisy rage, the world is hurrying and drifting away.

THE DANCE AT MOSCOW.

"A time to dance; a time to die." ECCLESIASTES III, 2, 4.

DURING the occupancy of the city of Moscow by the French army, a party of officers and soldiers determined to have a military levee, and for this purpose chose the deserted palace of a nobleman, in the vault of which a large quantity of powder had been deposited. That night the city was set on fire. As the sun went down they began to assemble. The females who followed the fortunes of the French forces, were decorated for the occasion. The gayest and noblest of the army were there, and merriment reigned over the crowd. During the dance the fire rapidly approached them; they saw it coming, but felt no fear. At length the building next to the one which they occupied was on fire. Coming

to the windows, they gazed upon the pillars of fire which swept upon their fortress, and then returned to their amusement. Again and again they left their pleasure to watch the progress of the flames. At length the dance ceased, and the necessity of leaving the scene of merriment became apparent to all. They are enveloped in a flood of fire, and gazed on with deep and awful solemnity. At length the fire communicating to their own building, caused them to prepare for flight, when a brave young officer, named Carnot, waved his jeweled glove above his head, and exclaimed: "One dance more, and defiance to the flame!" All caught the enthusiasm of the moment, and "one dance more, and defiance to the flame" burst from the lips of all. The dance commenced; louder and louder grew the sound of music, and faster and faster fell the pattering footsteps of dancing men and women, when suddenly they heard a cry, "The fire has reached the magazine, fly! fly! for life!" One moment they stood, transfixed with horror; they did not know the magazine was there, and ere they recovered from their stupor, the vault exploded; the building was shattered to pieces, and the dancers were hurled into a fearful eternity.

Thus will it be in the final day. Men will be as careless as were those ill-fated revelers. Methinks the hour has come, and I stand upon an eminence from which I behold the vices and the amusements of earth. I warn them and tell them that in such an hour as they think not the Son of man cometh. With jeering laugh they ask, "Where is the promise of his coming?" I bid them prepare to meet their God. They reply, "Pleasure is our God." I tell them of the awful judgment; a miserable eternity; and crying, "priestcraft!" they again engage in the noisy revel. Soon an awful rumbling is heard in the heavens. A thousand voices tell them that the angels are rolling out the judgment-throne. They reply, "One dance more, and defiance to that throne." Suddenly the stars go out, the moon turns to blood, all nature is convulsed, and universal

panic seizes the hearts of all men, when, horror-struck, I see some Carnot turn his bloodshot eyes upon the burning world, and waving his jeweled hand above his head, exclaim, "One dance more, and defiance to the flame!" and ere that dance is done, the bolt is sped, the magazine of the universe explodes, and *the time to dance is gone, GONE FOREVER, FOREVER.*

WHAT MAKES INFIDELS.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." MATTHEW V, 10.

IF I could take you to some spot where you could behold men bending all their abilities to destroy the good fame or the property of one who had done more for you and for whom you professed more friendship than any one else in the world—if I should afterward show you those men despitefully using that friend, insulting him, and stabbing him, and aiming to destroy him; and if the vail fell suddenly from your eyes, and you beheld, and lo! these assassins were your own sons; and if I could then show you that you had made those sons the despisers and foes of that most devoted and liberal friend of yours, you would doubtless be horrified, and all the sensibilities of your heart would be tortured. Christian man, Jesus is the strongest, wisest, and most devoted friend you ever had. He took you up out of the horrible pit. He gave you peace and joy in your heart. He blessed the work of your hand, so that you prospered, and you grew rich. He made you respected by your neighbors, so that you took place in society. You remember when you traveled about seeking employment as a journeyman mechanic, or spent years as a store clerk for a bare subsistence. Now you are wealthy. Let me ask you whether you have children, and whether you have reared those children for God, and whether you have not rather used the wealth which God has furnished, in cherishing vain and foolish notions in them—

making your sons fops and your daughters gay butterflies. O, brother Christian, it is a dreadful thing if you have, for it is so inconsistent with your professions of piety, and this it is which *makes infidels!*

I once knew a man whom God blessed—or cursed—with wealth. He had formerly been in moderate circumstances. By joining the Church he gained custom, and the only claim to respectability which he had was founded in those habits and connections which his religious profession formed for him. In the course of time he built a large house and furnished it in a superior and costly style. His family was small, and consequently several apartments, in which was enough furniture to support a missionary for a year, were closed almost constantly. By contributing largely to erect a house of worship, and becoming an official member of the Church, he acquired great control in the congregation. His children grew up around him. They received little or no spiritual instruction from him; he was too busy making money. When they were nearly of age they could not tell you what the fifth commandment was; and verily one would judge from their conduct that they knew as little of the spirit as the letter of that commandment. They went to parties and balls; they gambled and drank; and when any one, deeply solicitous for the welfare of the sons, would inform their father that they were in certain places in a state of intoxication, he was politely assured that he was meddling with business that did not concern him. He chose to send his boys to a school where they would be peculiarly exposed to temptation. There were schools enough established by his own denomination, but he did not choose to patronize them. He still flourished in business, and continued to add to his house and to his furniture. One article would be removed to make way for another that cost several hundred dollars more, in rooms that were opened for company only once in a month; but he was quick to perceive how the minister could live on little and get along without any house at all. No prayer

meetings were held in his mansion; and although he was a class-leader, his class was omitted for weeks, when a poor old woman, at whose house it was held, was compelled to hire out her rooms so as to obtain a decent subsistence. There were scarcely any books in the house, and he *subscribed to no religious paper*. His children were too nice when young to go to Sunday school, and as they grew a little older they were too proud. They knew almost nothing of the Bible, and were grossly ignorant of the Church to which their father belonged. On one occasion the denomination of Christians to which he was attached was about to erect a humble place of worship in the town where his children went to school. The agent called on him for help, without success. Several times did he apply. At last he begged him to give only one-fourth the interest for one year, on certain superfluities which he had added to his house, and which rendered him the subject of severe remarks, but he would not. He was then asked to give only one-half the amount which he allowed his children—at school in the town where the house of worship was to be built—as spending money, and which he knew was expended in lewdness, and cigars, and spiritous liquors; and he would not. His children knew all this. And what was the effect? Judge by what I tell you. He sometimes grew so happy in church *as to shout!* God forbid that I should judge my brother! but his shouts sent stillness and deadness through the congregation, and his boys, standing at the church door, would say to their young companions, “See that old hypocrite!” Heaven knows that when I first heard it I grew sick at heart, and said to my soul, **THIS IS WHAT MAKES INFIDELS!**

Christian brother, whose eyes shall fall upon this line, be assured that your children study your actions minutely; and that indulging them, spending your money on their lusts, inconsistently praying in the morning for the extension of Christ’s kingdom and doing nothing in the day to promote it, be assured all this will lead them to doubt your

piety, to despise all religion, and to wound the Redeemer in the house of his professed friend. Remember that your conduct may aid the influence of the obscene, fictitious, or skeptical books you may suffer them to read, in making your own children infidels.

THE GAME OF THE WOLVES.

"They devise deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the land."
PSALM XXXV, 20.

"THERE is no temptation," said John of Wesel, one of the greatest of the pre-Lutheran reformers, "so great as not to be tempted at all." We have a vivid illustration of this in a picture given us by a late writer on natural history. When the wild horses of Mexico, he tells us, are grazing unconsciously in a prairie, there may sometimes be seen gathering in the distance a troop of wolves, whom hunger has driven out after food. At first the horses snuff up the scent and become alarmed, and as long as they continue so all is safe; for their fleetness puts a barrier between themselves and their assailants, which the latter are wholly unable to surmount. But so grave and innocent do the wolves look—so solely graminivorous and urbane—that their intended victims soon become relieved from all fear, and begin again quietly to graze upon the same spot. Presently, two of the older and more wary of the wolves stroll forth, as it were listlessly, and apparently for the mere purpose of pastime, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating, and every now and then stopping to gambol with each other, as if to show their disengaged simplicity and buoyancy of heart. Again the horses become alarmed; but again, observing how very innocent and friendly their visitors appear, they fall once more to grazing secure on the fields. But the fatal moment has now come; and with an unerring spring, the nearest of the victims finds the fangs of one of his gaunt and wily pur-

suers fastened in his haunches, and those of another in his neck, and in a moment he is covered by the whole of the greedy pack that has been thus waiting till this moment to dash upon his prostrate frame.

How like is this to the attack of sin! At first it gathers at a distance, with an air of entire innocence and simplicity. "How inoffensive it looks!" says an unwarned observer. "Is that what you call a ball? Why, it is only putting one foot before another, and looking cheerful. And how bright, and gay, and honorable does that party look, that is sitting down to spend a friendly afternoon over its wine! Root of all evil, indeed; but is not a little money a very good thing? Yes, Church is well enough, but is not God in the woods also, and is there any harm in my going to spend a fine Sunday morning in them?" So it is that sin presents itself to the incautious soul. First it lounges listlessly in the distance, as if to show its harmlessness and disengagedness of purpose. Then when suspicion is disarmed, it comes nearer still, gamboling about as if it was mere pastime. It is not till the soul feels its fangs that it discovers that it is now the victim and slave of a master whose bitter and cruel yoke must be borne, not only through time, but through eternity.

Look jealously, O Christian, at the distant approach of sin; for know that if it is once allowed to come near, then art thou within its power, not it within thine! And as the atmosphere is filled with thy spiritual enemies, know that there is no temptation so great as to be conscious of no temptation at all.



THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

"I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." 2 CORINTHIANS VII, 4.

THE bee can extract honey from bitter flowers; the Christian can extract joy from the deepest sorrows. You know what an Æolian harp does. Place it on the sash

of your window, and sit down by its side. There are wild winds without; the tempest is wailing over the land and over the sea, and every thing is desolate, look where you will. But listen, what notes of softness strike your ear; low, plaintive, soft, soul-entrancing!

“Those mingling chords so wild are flung,
So soft their fitful murmurs ring,
They thrill as if an angel sung,
Or Ariel’s finger touched the string.
Now the notes awhile complain,
Now they with the breeze decay;
Hark! they cease—they breathe again—
A moment swell—then melt away!”

Just so with the harp of heaven in the Christian’s heart. It enables him in the highest tempest of earthly tribulation to be exceeding joyful, and to turn the confusion and tumult into the sweetest music.



THE POWER OF GOD.

“By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.” JOB XXVI, 13.

WE catch a feeble glimmer of God’s power from the lightning, which so sweeps all vitality out of the man whom it strikes, that the process of putrefaction begins in a moment; in the tornado, whose swiftness turns the fluid and voluble air into wide-reaching, iron-headed solidity, so that it strikes cities and forests like a battering-ram; in the ocean storm, that tosses proud navies upon its surface like bubbles; in the earthquake, which shakes cities as though they were toys in its hand; in the volcano, the mere reflection of whose terrors seems to fill the sky with demon shapes of fire, and whose fathomless caldron up-boils as a fountain of desolation. Yet these occasional manifestations no more represent God’s resistless forces working through all the frame of nature, than the leakage of a few drops of water, or a little jet of steam, a feeble hiss of imprisoned

air represents the driving, cleaving, or crushing force of the fiery and ponderous machines of human workmanship. Animal fear sees God's power with the senses—in noise, in tumult, in flame; but reason sees it in silence, in order, in its still yet eternal activities. Reflect, for a moment, what this power is constantly doing, in the inanimate, insentient world. Who, from the surface of the earth and of the sea, lifts up those particles of water that form the clouds, that descend in rain, that sustain all vegetable and animal life, that fill the channels of the rivers and brim the ocean; who impels the winds in their variable or their periodic courses, and who sends the ceaseless currents of electricity around the globe?

But the thought is too vast, and in attempting to grasp too much, we lose all. Let us divide the great theme, and look at it in parts. Take the first warm day in Spring; go out into the cultivated fields; walk through the solemn woods, or by the streams. What millions of millions of roots are now waking from their wintery slumber; how in all their veins they tingle with new life, as, through all their myriad pores, they suck in the water that lies by their side! How many seeds beneath your feet are alive; what gases are in fermentation within them to swell, and burst, and send out the new germ! The air is populous with insects that perform their mystic dances in the sunbeam. The migratory birds rise in such flocks as darken the air, to go northward on their heaven-appointed course, and the migratory fishes make a wave swell up in the sea as they journey southward, to fulfill the great economy of life. Yesterday, the branch of every tree as it stood out against the sun was naked; to-day, his light is obscured by its myriad leaflets. Each one of all those insect swarms, of those flocks of birds, of those shoals of fish, has its bones and muscles, its lungs and brain; and an instinct that guides them to their destination burns in them all, as though each one were a king or a queen, and gloried in his royal blood. What varied, what amazing, what incalculable life! Who fashioneth these

countless forms? From whose capacious urn are they filled with life and joy? Who metes out the span of all their days, and upholds the order of their generations?

Take a day in Summer; the winds are astir, the waters flow, the light descends. Can you count the spires of grass in all the fields, or number the flowers in garden, and copse, and dell? Every stalk of grain is higher and larger at night than in the morning, and with what motions, and selections, and adaptations, its growth has been accomplished! Take a single tree that has been cut down, and count its pores, multiply these by all the trees of all the forests in all the earth, and multiply these again by all the particles of sap that have traveled up and down them all. Who supplies these countless growths with the peculiar nourishment that each one needs? Who winnows light, air, and the gases, that the sour and the sweet, the nutritious and the medicative, may receive according to their affinities? Who superintends this vast laboratory, and keeps it from lapsing into chaos?

Take a day in Autumn, when the infinite grains of corn are ripening; when orchard-trees, and forest-trees, and the vines that cling and festoon upon them, are preparing their innumerable fruits and seeds, and when the bulbs beneath the ground are finishing the work of their year and their life. Who is the Sculptor that molds their forms? Who is the Limner that paints them with such exquisite tints? Who is the great Chemist that fills them with such delicious and infinitely-varied savors and flavors, for the nutrition, the health, and the gratification of man; some for the young and some for the old; some for the strong and some for the invalid?

Now, somewhere, on this globe of ours, and at all times, there is Spring; somewhere there is Summer; somewhere there is Autumn; and all the varied processes of Spring, Summer, and Autumn are going on together.

Look at the higher life of man. It is supposed there are nine hundred millions of human beings on this globe.

Who opens and closes their ever-beating hearts? Who heaves and contracts their restless lungs? Who, through artery and vein, circulates their ever-flowing blood? Who kindles in the brain the steady light of truth, or coruscates across its dome the auroral light of sentiment and love? Who spreads the table at which these multitudes are fed? Who spreads out the beautiful drapery of twilight before drawing the curtain of darkness around their bed; and who, when the morning sun comes rolling westward with its broad wave of light, wakens them to joy and activity again?

Go out at midnight; look up into that dread yet glorious concave, and ask your soul whose arm it is that upholds those unpillared chambers of the sky; who fills that vast domain with organized, and sentient, and doubtless with rational and spiritual life; and then reflect that all the galaxies and constellations which you can behold with the unassisted eye, are only the frontispiece, not to the mighty volumes of God's works, but only to the index of the mighty volumes? Beyond Sirius, beyond Orion, beyond the Pleiades, the azure fields of immensity are all filled with worlds, system beyond system, and rank behind rank, whom God in his mercy has removed to those immense distances from us, lest our mortal vision should be blasted by their overwhelming effulgence. And as you can not find one inch of our lower earth where God is not at work, so there is not one inch in all those boundless upper realms where God is not at work.

Against such a God, as with feeble words and inadequate thoughts I have attempted to describe—against such a God, do you wish to lift, or do you dare to lift your pigmy arm? His resistless laws that cleave a pathway wherever they are sent, and punish the transgressor wherever they are transgressed—these laws do you dare to break? If you would hesitate to violate a father's command, when he stands over you with a rod; if you would shrink from resisting the authority of a sovereign, who has judges, and officers, and

armies, and navies in his control, then, O! how can you ever dare, how can you ever wish to dare to confront the power and majesty of the Eternal One; of that One who can inwrap the heavens with his thunder-clouds, and make you the mark of all their volleyed lightnings; who can array his volcanoes in battalions, and bury you beneath their molten lavas; who can sink you in the earth's central fires, to lie, without consuming, in that seething caldron, or imprison you in the eternal solitudes of polar ice; or—unspeakably more terrible than all this—can turn your own soul inward in retrospection upon its past life, to read its own history of voluntary wrong in its self-recorded Book of Judgment? Nor can you find refuge in non-existence. You may call upon the seas to drown you, but there is not water enough in all the seas. You may call upon the fires to consume, but the fires will say, we can not consume remorse. You may call upon the Arctic frosts to congeal the currents of life, but they will say, we have no power over the currents of thought, or the pulses of the immortal life. You may call upon the universe to annihilate you, but the universe will respond, “God alone can annihilate, and God will say, live forever.”

O, that I could so thunder in your ears, that the sound would never cease to vibrate in your hearts, that word which God has written in letters of flame over every avenue to temptation—which he has inscribed on the lintels and door-posts of the gateways of sin, which is blazoned on the hither side of every seducement to wrong.

BEWARE! IF YOU TREAD THERE, OR LOOK THERE, OR THINK THERE, YOU ENCOUNTER OMNIPOTENCE:

Or if I could, I would say to you all, in tones of sweetness and affection, deep and tender as those which angels use, how can you ever do with your hands, or speak with your lips, or conceive in your hearts any thing that is blasphemous, or defiant, or dishonoring, or unpleasing, to that Being of perfect power and perfect love?—*Horace Mann.*

TOO LATE.

"When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." LUKE XIII, 25-27.

THERE is a deep pathos in this lyric of Tennyson, which may apply more truly to those shut out from the marriage supper of the Lamb, than to those into whose lips he put it.

"Late, late—so late—and dark and chill the night!

Late, late—so late—but we can enter still.

Too late, too late! ye can not enter now.

No light had we, for that we do repent.

And learning this, the Bridegroom will relent.

Too late, too late! ye can not enter now.

No light—so late—and dark and chill the night!

O! let us in, that we may find the light!

Too late, too late! ye can not enter now.

Have we not heard the Bridegroom is so sweet?

O! let us in, though late, to kiss his feet!

No, no—too late! ye can not enter now."



THE WOUNDED SOLDIER OF SOLFERINO.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days." ECCLESIASTES XI, 1.

A FEW months ago, a young Swiss theological student was traveling amid the Piedmontese valleys. Bad health had sent him from home; but the balmy wind and genial sky of Italy had failed to exercise their healing powers upon him, and the young man felt heavy at heart. He was on the eve of entering his field of labor when torn away from it by illness; and it seemed to him that his days were fruitlessly squandered in search of health. Still, he had his Master's work at heart, and in his daily walks around

the retired hamlet where he was staying, he was looking for some opening for doing good.

On a Sunday afternoon, as he had left the humble wooden chapel, where some thirty Italian Protestants had been led by him, in prayer and singing of hymns, he wandered toward the mountain, to enjoy some hours of quiet and peaceful communion with himself and God. He had not gone far when he perceived a small cottage, half hidden by the luxuriant branches of the vine, and sheltered under a high, projecting rock. On a bench at the door, warming himself in the sun's bright setting rays, was a young man, little beyond boyhood—pale and thin. His arm tied up, and his bandaged head at once told the student that he was one of Victor Emanuel's many brave Sardinian soldiers, who had returned wounded and maimed to their mountain homes.

As our friend was approaching him, he saw a small French tract in the soldier's hands; and surprised at finding a book in that language in that Italian hut, he at once sat down by the reader, and entered into conversation with him. The young soldier told him a simple and touching story. He had joined one of the regiments of volunteers which had answered, from every mountain hold and sequestered valley, their country's call; he had fought the glorious battles of Magenta and Solferino; on that last bloody field, he had seen nearly all the soldiers of his regiment fall around him. One in particular, a young Frenchman, who had enlisted with him, and whom he loved like a brother, fell before him, killed by one of the last shots of the enemy. He had kneeled, in the confusion of the battle-field, beside his friend, and when he had seen all efforts to revive him were in vain, he had taken his knapsack to save it from the rapacity of the camp followers. It contained only his clothes and the tract "*It is I*," translated into French. "This is the very book, sir," added the soldier, "which has become dear to me; for I had often seen my friend reading it, when resting from

our marches, or stopping in our barracks. I have often read it through myself, since that terrible day, when I saw my poor Francois' eyes close in death—and during the long weeks I have spent here, unable to work, and alone with my thoughts, it has become not only my companion, but my friend, too."

What were the young student's feelings at hearing these words? That tract *he* had translated into French, years before, little thinking, then, of the work those pages would do, on the battle-field and in the lonely cottage.

He had read the English tract, and being much comforted and benefited by it, he had wished to make an old friend, who could not understand the English language, a sharer in his enjoyment. That French translation had found its way into print; and just when the young laborer was lamenting his incapacity of working in his Master's vineyard, the Lord placed before him that living proof of the truth of his Word: "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days."



LOVE'S LABOR LIGHT.

"And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her." GENESIS XXIX, 20.

THE picture before us is of a Syrian village, with flocks and herds sprinkled over the green pasturage and along the uplands. Among them, with watchful eye, moves a young Hebrew shepherd. Fear sent him hither from his father's home beyond the solemn Euphrates. But love has drawn him too. To woo the beautiful daughter of Laban, as well as to escape a resentful brother, he has come. He has made a bargain to watch Laban's flocks for seven long years; and his wages are to be—a *wife*. So as he tends his fleecy charge beneath the palm-trees, his thoughts are of her who comes out occasionally to the well's mouth, and rewards him with a glimpse of her

sweet virgin countenance. At eventide as the maidens grind the grain, it is her voice—singing at the barley-mill—which heals the hardships of the sultry day, and sends him happy to his rest. And so we read that the seven years seemed unto him but a few days, for the *love* he had to her. Within himself there was a relief from every load—a solace for every sorrow—a perpetual stimulant to toil and patience. He lived on love.

Is there not a principle here worth every Christian's study? The principle is this—the service of God is only pleasant, is only thorough, and is only effective, when it is a *labor of love*. Our heart must be in our religion, and our religion in our heart, or else it is the most toilsome of drudgeries, and the most intolerable of hypocrisies. Here lies the simple reason why the duties of Christianity become so irksome to many a Church member. He has no heart in them. It is all toil and task work. He tugs at it as a galley-slave tugs at the oar. He takes his Bible as he would take a dose of nauseous medicine. He goes to his closet as an anchorite clammers to his mountain cave or to the top of his pillar. The Church bell rings him to the sanctuary, but no answering bell in his own grateful soul responds, "O, come and let us worship." He hungers not, he thirsts not for the Word of Life. Money giving for Christ's work is to him a downright robbery, and he flings his unwilling pence *at* the Lord's treasury, as if he would say, "Theré it is, since you *will* have it; when will these calls of charity be done with?" The whole routine of his external performances in the Church is gone through slavishly, carelessly, hypocritically, as if the sharp eye of a taskmaster were upon him, and the lash of an overseer were cracked about his head.

There is but one way to become a happy, thorough, effective Christian. Whether you are a pastor watching over the Church fold, or a Sabbath school teacher tending the little flock of your class, or a parent guarding the fireside lambs, or a reformer keeping guard over the

rights of the neglected, the ignorant, the guilty, or the oppressed, you must learn to work *heartily*. A man who sincerely loves the Lord Jesus Christ, will love to labor for him. He will welcome toil. He will bend cheerfully to every burden, rejoicing to be Christ's willing bondman—and Christ's "freedman" too. For to him liberty is but the possibility of duty.

Would you be a happy Christian? Get the heart full of Jesus. Would you be safe from spiritual declension? Put your love of the Savior so deep down that it shall underlie all selfishness—so deep that the frosts of unbelief can not reach it—so deep that the devil can not come at it—so deep that the friction of daily life can not wear upon it—so deep that when even the powers and passions of our nature are dried up by old age, this hidden fountain shall give out its undying stream.

It is said that artesian wells never go dry; but when the torrid heats of July are parching the upper surface into drifts of dust, there is an unexhausted vein far down below, that gushes up through its rocky tube, and defies the thirsty sunbeams to quench its perennial flow. So does Christ within us break up through our dusty, selfish humanity, and overflow our nature with graces, till even the desert spot becomes a garden of the Lord.

Again we say, if you would be a lightsome laborer in Christ's vineyard, you must love your Redeemer. Do you love him now but a little? Then despise not the day of small things. You have made a good beginning. There may have been but a slight heart-beat in Jacob's breast when he first met Rachel at the well's mouth in Haran. But that young affection grew into a love that made the happy hours to tread on roses. And it was with a breaking heart that he hung over his dying wife as she lay moaning in woman's sorest sorrow on the wayside to Bethlehem.

So may your love to Jesus grow till it becomes the master-passion of the soul—till it conquers lust and subdues accursed self—grow till you enjoy the blessed service of

the Master—till there is nothing on earth you desire beside him—till you can exclaim with the victorious apostle, “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the *love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!*”

DR. MILNE AND THE YOUNG ITINERANT.

“Put on kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness.” COLOSSIANS III, 12.

ALL have heard about Dr. Morrison, the missionary to China. As his labor was great, and almost too much for one to accomplish, he wanted some one to help him; and he wrote home to the Missionary Society, in England, to send out another missionary.

When they got his letter, they set to work to inquire among their friends for a suitable young man to go out to China, as a missionary to help Dr. Morrison. After a while a young man from the country—a pious young man, who loved Jesus Christ—came and offered himself. He was poor, had poor clothes on, and looked like a countryman—rough and unpolished. He went to these gentlemen, was introduced to them, and had a talk with them. They then said he might go out of the room, till they consulted with each other about him. When he was gone, they said they were afraid the young man would never do to help Dr. Morrison; that it would not do to send him as a missionary, as he was but a rough countryman. Finally, they said to one of their number, Dr. Phillips, “Doctor, you go out and tell the young man that the gentlemen do not think him fit to be a missionary, but if he would like to go out as *servant* to a missionary, we will send him.” The Doctor did not much like to do it; but he told the young man that they did not think he had education enough, and a great many other things necessary for a missionary, but if he

would go as a servant they would send him out. Now, a great many would have said, "No, you do n't do any such thing; if I can't go as a missionary, I won't go at all." He said, "If they do not think me fit to be a missionary, I will go as a servant; I am willing to be a hewer of wood, or drawer of water, or to do any thing to advance the cause of my Heavenly Master." He was then sent out as a servant, but he soon got to be a missionary; and turned out to be the REV. DR. MILNE, one of the best and greatest missionaries that ever went out to any country.

A young preacher, once, of the Methodist Church, was sent out on a circuit to preach the Gospel. One evening, as he was going upon his journey to preach, he stopped at the house of a farmer, who was also a Methodist. This farmer, though a good man, was sometimes very cross. He had met with some people who deceived him, and professed to be what they were not. When the minister, therefore, came to his house—as he was rather rough-looking and uneducated, though the love of God was in his heart, and he desired to preach the Gospel—he told the farmer what he came for. The farmer was very cold to him, and even said something about being often deceived by people, who were not what they seemed to be. "There's my barn," said he; "put up your horse in the barn." He had plenty of servants, and might have sent one of them, the young minister thought; and he was about to mount his horse and go on his way, although it was going to rain. Then he thought he would not: "That is not the way Jesus would have done," he said to himself; so he took his horse to the barn, and went to the house. When he came to the front door, the farmer sent one of his servants to take him round to the kitchen; and when there he found some very coarse provisions spread out for him on a rough, solitary table. He thought it very strange, and the servants in the kitchen thought it strange, too, that their master should send the minister to the kitchen. The young man felt much hurt, and thought he could not stand it, and

would get his horse and go on again; but he said to himself, "Jesus would not have done so: I will try to be humble, like Jesus."

He sat down to eat the bread, and did not complain. After a while he heard the bell ring for prayers, and he went in with the servants to the room, and took his place. The farmer read a chapter; and, on getting through, it was very clear he had not made up his mind whether he would pray himself, or call upon the minister. At last he called on the young man, and asked him to pray. The minister felt glad to have an opportunity of praying; and when he began he forgot every thing but the presence of God, and he poured out his feelings in prayer before him. His heart was full, and his feelings, which had been wounded by what he had just borne, were relieved by tears. He wept; the servants wept; the people of the family wept; and even the farmer himself wept; and they had a weeping time of it—all kneeling down, and all melted to tears. When they got up, the farmer came to the young minister, the tears running down his cheeks, and took him by the hand, and said, "O, forgive me, my dear friend and brother, forgive me; and I will pray God to forgive me too, for treating you so unkindly. I do not know what is the matter with me. Satan has been tempting me to do every thing that is wrong. I am ashamed of myself for treating you so. I wonder you said nothing cross, and was willing to stay when I sent you to the kitchen." The minister said, "I was trying to do like Jesus, and as he would have done; and I hope you will try to do so too." The farmer took him into his parlor, and gave him the best bed and the best room in the house to occupy that night, and pressed him to stay two or three days. He consented to stay the next day, when they had a meeting, got the people together, and the minister preached. That sermon was blessed in the conversion of two or three souls. Two or three of the farmer's family were converted to God, and became useful Christians.—*R. Newton, D. D.*

SATAN TRANSFORMED.

"For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." 2 COR. XI, 14.

SATAN does not march his victim up to face perdition point-blank. He leads him to it by easy stages, and through a labyrinth that shows no danger. Round and round go those circling currents of the Northern Sea that swallow the ship; and by the same winding coil goes the spiritual decline that ends in spiritual death. It is gayety, not the grave, that youth is seeking, when it steps inside the circle of forbidden pleasure. It is for social cheer, for good-companionship, because he would not be morose, because he would scatter his despondency, that the drunkard drinks damnation, not for damnation's sake. It is to pay his debt, the gambler urges, that he plays—to pay one debt that he forfeits all his credit. The first falsehood of a practiced liar may have been told to save a friend's reputation—a generous motive he thinks: Satan transformed into an angel of light! A worldly life is begun for the more decent uses that wealth may be put to; but it is followed afterward in servitude to that unscrupulous taskmaster, Avarice. How much idleness that is full of guilt, under the plausible apology of husbanding our strength! The sluggard will save himself for future labor, he says; and in the very economy of his purpose acquires a lazy habit that drains all the strength out of his sinews. When envy would detract from a rival, it puts itself into the chair of impartial criticism. When prejudice would stab a blameless character, it pretends to be indignant at hypocrisy. Many a man and many a woman have been thought righteously opposed to sin, when they were only maliciously opposed to some particular sinner. Spite against an erring brother or sister was the feeling. Zeal against vice was the cloak put over it. Jealousy or revenge is the motive; but it borrows a mask of morality. The thief explains his stealing by the hunger of his children. Murder itself disclaims all thirst

for blood: it was revenge for insult; it was desperation; it was a paroxysm of wounded pride, or of ungoverned anger. If a man fears that reform will disturb his comfort, or interrupt his immoral traffic, he would have you believe he is a stanch conservatist on principle. But if he can realize private profits out of a new movement, he first makes a merit of radicalism. "When I the most strictly and religiously confess myself," said Montaigne, "I find that the best virtue I have has in it some tincture of vice; and I am afraid that Plato, in his purest virtue, if he had listened and laid his ear close to himself, would have heard some jarring sound of human mixture."

Be sure that the attack of temptation is most apt to be oblique, not open and direct. It destroys our moral foothold by a sidelong onset on our principles. When the Russian troops were retreating across a frozen lake before Napoleon's army, Bonaparte stationed his artillery on a neighboring elevation, and ordered them to fire on the ice and break it up, and thus ingulf the enemy's regiments. The guns were leveled and discharged, but the balls glanced and rolled on the ice without breaking it. Suddenly one of his colonels thought to elevate his howitzers and fire into the air. The momentum of the descending projectiles, a falling shower of iron and lead, shattered the ice, and sent down the host into the waters of the lake. It is not the only instance in which the arts of war have followed precisely the arts of the devil. It is by the oblique shot of our tempters that

"The meanest foe of all the train
Has thousands and ten thousands slain."

Satan never plays a bold game. He wins by not showing his worst at first, by concealing his tricks, transformed into an angel of light. It takes a great deal of effort to put us thoroughly on our guard against his wiles; but when it is done, it is worth the pains.

Tempting men imitate their great leader and prototype. They never go directly and openly to their object. If they

would bend you from your integrity, they will flatter your self-respect by holding out to you a moral inducement. If they would corrupt your purity, they insinuate the poison through some appeal to your better affections. If they would weaken the holy restraints that gird in, with their blessed zone, the innocence of childhood, they will urge some sly argument to an honorable pride, or else to a friendly sympathy, or else to a praiseworthy love of independence; and the first battery that has been plied against many a boy's virtue has been the cunning caution that bade him not be afraid of his elders. They may say, as Milton makes the archfiend say, sitting like a cormorant on a tree that overlooked the sinless Eden and the yet innocent inmates, deceiving even his own black heart:

"Should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honor and empire with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damned, I should abhor."

Theologians can cover their sectarian misrepresentations with the plea of "zeal for the cause," and controversialists baptize their bigotry with language of Holy Writ wrested from its meaning.

"The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. . . .
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!"

Unrighteous souls are like performers at a masquerade; only all the costumes are chosen out of the wardrobe of religion, while all the living figures under them are disciples of Belial. Every iniquity that is done under the sun would be glad to furnish itself out of the haberdashery of respectable appearances. No apostle of holiness ever lived, perhaps, but has had his likeness taken, his deportment mimicked, and his features copied by hypocrisy, to palm off depravity with. Every noble look and gesture of heroic virtue has been mocked by villainy and shame.

"There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on its outward parts."

Your temptations hover about you in wary ambush. They are not in great emergencies, heralded by horrid threatenings, but in the little things of your daily life, and hidden under unsuspected appearances. They lurk in the luxuries on which you repose; in the pillows of comfort on which you lay your thoughtless heads; in the emulation where you mistake the pride of excelling for the love of wisdom, and superiority for scholarship; in the common labor where the world gambles for your soul; in the merchandise where you are offered gain for falsehood; in the social fellowship where criminality corrupts under the name of cordiality; in the flatteries of your beauty, or your talents, or your disposition, which borrow the silver tones of friendship, and sound so like them that you listen; in the familiar pleasures that make the feet of the hours so swift, and the earth so satisfying, that you feel no need of heaven. Here are your tempters. They are disguised; they take circuitous paths; they carry gifts in their hands, and place crowns on your heads; they are clothed like angels of light.—*Dr. F. D. Huntington.*

BACKBITERS AND BACKBITING.

“Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat.” 1 CORINTHIANS IV, 12.

A GENTLEMAN states that he once saw the title “*Slander Book*,” printed on the binding of a small ledger. On examining it, he found that the various members of the household were charged so much apiece for each slander. The accounts were very neatly and correctly kept, credits entered, etc., as in a merchant’s office. He was informed that this plan of fining for slander originated with a good young girl, with a view to prevent evil-speaking and its consequences. Youthful as she was, she observed the wretched effects of it in families and neighborhoods; what great fires were kindled by it; what sweet fountains were imbittered

by it; so she hit upon this expedient to knock it on the head.

“Believe not each accusing tongue,
As some weak people do,
But ever hope that story wrong
Which *ought* not to be true.”

If we all did this, false witnesses would be starved.

When any one was speaking ill of another in the presence of Peter the Great, he would shortly interrupt him, and say, “Well, no, but has he not a bright side? Come, tell me, what have you noticed as excellent in him? It is easy to splash mud; but I would rather help a man to keep his coat clean.”

If we ourselves are the objects of calumny, there is no question as to our duty. Do as our Lord did: “When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when they threatened he answered not, but committed himself to Him who judgeth righteously.” “If one slander thee,” says an ancient philosopher, “first consider whether he has truth on his side; and if so, reform thyself, that his censures may not affect thee.” When Plato was assured that the boys in the street were laughing at his singing, “Ah,” said he, “then I must learn to sing better.” Being reminded that he had many aspersers, “It is no matter,” said he, “I will so live that none shall believe them.” Hearing, another time, that an intimate friend had spoken detractingly of him, he said, “I am confident he would not do it if he had not reason for it.” This is the surest method, as well as the noblest, of extracting the sting from a reproach. A *guilty* conscience needs no accusation, and a *good* conscience fears none.



THE WORKING OF SORROW.

“I have replenished the sorrowful soul.” JEREMIAH XXXI, 25.

SORROW is to be recognized as sorrow. Nothing is gained by arguing it out of the way. It is presuppos-

ing, and fostering an unmanly weakness, to assume that a man can not bear whatever burden God imposes upon him, but must be cajoled into the belief that it is not much of a burden after all, before he will undertake it. A man loses his property. It is true that he has wife and children, health and honor left, and these are much, but the loss of property is a great loss. Money commands time and space. Money brings beauty, and elegance, and comfort, and culture. Money means eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame, and warmth to the chilled, and clothes to the naked, and hope to the despairing, and strength to the weak, and the man who loses this has met with a severe loss.

But the comfort lies—not very much in pointing out what he has left, for he had all those before he lost any thing—but in remembering that God in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways, appoints to every man his lot, and all things—pain, sickness, weariness, poverty, length of days, riches, and honor—*all* things work together for good to them that love God. He could, if he had chosen, make every man great, and rich, and powerful. That he has not done this, proves that he did not will to do it. We feel that if we were rich, or eloquent, or self-possessed, we could do a great deal more good than we can now, but our very weaknesses may, and should become “nimble servitors to do his will.” The chosen path is barred to our eager feet. One obstacle stands in the way of success. A single circumstance, small, but not slight, forces us from the life that we like, to the one we do not like. One drop of sour spoils the whole cup of sweet. But it is of the Lord, and he means us only good. Fortitude may be as heroic as courage. Patience is as sublime as strength. “They also serve who only stand and wait.” “Knowledge by suffering entereth.” In the immovable shadow of a great sorrow, or in the flickering shade of many little sorrows, all virtue may flourish. The utmost grandeur of character may be attained by uncom-

plaining, not stoical, submission to his Divine will. Alone with sorrow, alone with trial, man communes with his Maker, and finds his grace sufficient. From the grave of a dead hope we may rise to newness of life. From a disappointed ambition we may work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. There is no strength like the strength of him who has breasted his disappointments and overcome them—whose feet are planted upon the wrecks of his own plans, and whose eyes are lifted unto the hills whence strength cometh.

And deep below all—underlying every pang, rests the hope of a blessed resurrection. Earth may be ever so better, but heaven is within every man's scope. And that affliction is indeed light which is but for a moment. Through warfare, or peace, we are pressing on into the Celestial City. Every Christmas morning, every June sunset, brings us, if we so will it, nearer—nearer—nearer—the Beautiful Land.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOME IS IN HEAVEN.

"Here have we no continuing city." HEBREWS XIII, 14.

REVELATION is confirmed in this truth by many auxiliary voices. Every calamity that befalls us, every heartache that chills our social relations, every sigh that ascends from longing hearts, utters the truth that this is not our home. All endeavors to make *earth* a home end in miserable failure. It is useless and worse than useless to war against the constitution of our natures. God intended man to make earth a type of our real home—a dim and distant shadow of the "city which hath foundations."

We make our best use of this world when we regard it as the basis from which to survey the other. Without heaven poetry could have no existence. The key-note of the poetic is future perfection, and the heaven of the Christian is the highest perfection. I know of no better illustration of these truths than a simple expression which fell

from the lips of a godly friend of mine. Through perseverance and industry he had been able to build himself a house. But his chief boast was *that from his fireside he could see his father's house on the distant hill*. "No matter the weather," said he, "whether Winter or Summer, Spring or Autumn—no matter the sky, whether cloudless or stormy—when I sit by my east window father's roof and chimney tops, the gleam of his lamp at night, are always visible to my sight." His words contain the philosophy of life, and inclose, as in a nutshell, the principles of holy living. Enviably—yea, thrice enviably—is the man who can pierce the clouds of social darkness which surround our earthly homes, and see his Father's house, with its many mansions, in the distant heaven.

"When shall I reach that happy place,
And be forever blest?
When shall I see my Father's face,
And in his bosom rest?

Fill'd with delight, my raptur'd soul
Would here no longer stay:
Though Jordan's waves around me roll,
Fearless I 'd launch away."

Let the Winter wind sweep and the long rains pour, still from his mansion here the Christian, by faith, can see, through all the tempest and darkness, the light beaming from the mansions in heaven, and by and by, bidding farewell to the earthly, he shall take perpetual possession of his eternal home.



THE RIDE IN THE RAIL-CAR.

"Put ye on the Lord Jesus." ROMANS XIII, 14.

SEE how you stand related to those that God makes the first object of your care—your children. You can not help exerting an influence for good or for evil over them. During the first twelve or fifteen years of a child's life, father

and mother are like God to it. Except in cases of great wickedness, children do not believe their father or mother can sin. The things you do are the model after which your children take pattern. You are, by your words, your deeds, and the flow of your conduct, the interpretation of the Bible in your own houses. Your whole life is a silent teaching and preaching to those around you.

I received a very proper rebuke the other day—although it was not meant for a rebuke. I was traveling in the cars. A friend from Utica was with me. He sat down in one seat, and I took another which was offered me. It is so fatiguing to talk in the cars, that I usually avoid it as much as I can; so I have contracted the habit of trying to sit alone. I sat down in one end of the seat, and put my carpet-bag on the other end; and then fell into a dreamy state, and so remained till, the car becoming full, a gentleman came to take the seat occupied by my carpet-bag. My friend—he is a warm friend—said to me, afterward, “I took the liberty to watch you. I am always selfish, and always trying to get a whole seat, and I thought I would see whether you were different from me in that respect; and when you sat down on one end of your seat and opened your carpet-bag on the other, I said to myself, ‘That’s it, that’s the sign; he means to have the whole seat to himself.’”

Well, it did me good. I do not think I shall open my carpet-bag on the end of my seat again without thinking that wherever I go I am watched. Men like to see what a minister’s idea of being a Christian is. I once heard a man in the cars speaking with great contempt and disgust about ministers, on account of their arrogance and want of politeness. It sunk down deep in my heart. It takes a good many of these things, you know, to correct such habits in us. We need line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little, to make us what we should be.

Now, that which is true in this single instance, is true in

a thousand other things. The little child five years old, that you think does not know what you say, will remember what you say till he is twenty-five years old. It has been so in my case. I remember being distressed when I was eight years old because I thought my father was not a Christian. He did some things that I supposed a Christian ought not to do. I gave a very literal version to the passage which it is thought makes being rich inconsistent with being a Christian. And when my uncle sent my father a crate of china—a whole set of blue dishes—and I saw plate after plate, cup after cup, and saucer after saucer, brought in, my fears began to rise, and I fell into deep distress because my father was rich—living on a salary of eight hundred dollars, with a family of thirteen children! I watched him and made a plain application of every plain precept to his example.

Do you not suppose your children know where your lives are inconsistent with your professions? I tell you they examine you a great deal more sharply than we, as a committee, examine those who present themselves to us as candidates for Church-membership. You can not be inconsistent and they not know it quickly.

You are set on a candlestick to give light to those around you. Do you shine with a true light? Do you show forth the attributes of Christ? Are your life and conduct characterized by benignity, patience, gentleness, love, and the other Christian graces? Do your children see Christ manifested in you? Is your example such that their conscience rises up and condemns them, and they pray and strive to be like you? Do they think, "I never shall be such a Christian as father and mother are?" I have known persons who kept me in a perpetual state of self-condemnation when I was in their presence, and the hem of whose garments I felt that I was not worthy to touch. I do not think any body has been made to suffer in this way by my example. How has it been in your case? Do you carry yourself in such a way as to lead people to say, "There is something in relig-

ion ; there is such a thing as personal piety ; there is a new life created by the power of God in the souls of men !” Is that the effect of your mode of living ?—*H. W. Beecher.*

THE CITIES IN THE CLOUDS.

‘How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? and how oft cometh their destruction upon them?’ *JOB XXI, 17.*

THE Straits of Messina lie between Italy and Sicily. I remember, says an American tourist, a voyage I was taking through them in the year 1854. The water was glassy and still as the bosom of a forest lake in a midsummer’s morn. Toward twilight, a short distance forward of us, the clouds skirting the horizon had assumed a violet tint, and there were sights, strange, rich sights, in those clouds. I looked and saw what I imagined to be vast cathedrals and palaces. A fellow-passenger thought he saw cities pillowed there in the coming sunset. “I see streets,” said a lady friend, “and men walking. I hear tones of an organ and the hum of human voices.” The vision was one of beauty unsurpassed. The vessel sped on, and just as we thought we were to run into port of one of those cities, the vision faded, the music died away, and twilight was upon us.

You are a sinner, perhaps, reader. You have been sailing through the straits of pleasure. You have seen cities and palaces in the tinted horizon before you. You have turned your ear to catch the music. You have thought that soon your vessel would sail into the port of some city of gold, and that your bliss would be perfected forever. Then have come in suddenness the dark cloud, the shadows of night, and the blinding tempest, and your fancied possessions have perished in what you all along thought was the sure grasp of bliss. “I thought I was about to paint my best painting,” said the great Raphael, just as age and disease came on him and unnerved his right hand. When writing what he thought was his greatest composition, said

Sir Walter Scott, "My brain refused to act, and I had only tears to enjoy." Go on, great man of the world. Up with pleasure's sail. Out upon the sea with your bark. Let the rainbow paint the skies for you, and the zephyr fan your cheek with its softness. By and by the rainbow will disappear, and the waters will get chill and cold, and the raven-wing of the tempest will flap over you, and darkness and despair will settle down on you forever.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

"For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." JOB XIX, 25, 26.

THERE are some who make light of the body. I am not one of them.

It is an easy resignation, indeed, when it concerns ourselves; a bitter grief when some beloved being is in question.

There it lies, that poor body; there is that face that I have looked at so much, the eyes which rested gently upon me, the mouth that spoke to me as no other will ever speak more; there is the whole aspect—I knew not whether it were beautiful or not—which was my sun, which was my life.

If my lips touch that brow ever so lightly, they meet a marble coldness there. Have you ever felt it sink down from the lips to the heart, that piercing, unnatural chill, unlike any other, that chill upon the forehead of the dead?

That body so sacredly cherished; that poor body, heretofore the object of such tender care; they take it from me now! Strangers come, who bear it away, dig a grave, and lay it there; the earth is heaped up over it. The dust, the rain, the Winter winds will all sweep over that grave; and while I am sitting, sheltered, beside our hearth, while I am warming myself—he—he is lying low out there, alone, forsaken.

O, this cry that eloquent lips have uttered ! every funeral procession has extorted it from some heart in its distress. It is not the cry of madness ; it is the protest of nature and of reason.

We were not made for this ; God had not created us for this ; the image of God was not destined to molder into dust. We may be submissive, may check the rebellious words that rise to our lips, but our thoughts will follow those remains, will glide into that tomb, will open that coffin, and return with tidings which will tear our very vitals.

During that last illness, while I possessed it still, one of my deepest sorrows was to see that poor frame decline. When my anxious looks encountered those altered features ; when one of those ominous changes that one will not allow to one's self, suddenly burst upon me, I felt my heart sink. At such times, my face buried in my hands, my knees giving way under me, I fell down somewhere out of sight, more truly dying than that loved one in his very death-agony.

The destruction of the body ! There lies the curse, the anguish of one who watches by a death-bed.

And now that years have worn away, with their good days and their bad, do you know what it is that suddenly lights up the widow's faded face ? do you know why she sheds these happy tears ? She has seen again—yes, like a lightning flash, some smile, some trick of feature, has appeared before her ; some gesture, some intonation, a stray note dying away as suddenly as it rose. With passionate energy she clasps one of her sons in her arms ; he has looked at her in the way his father used to look ; he has said, as he used to say, "I am cold ;" he has shivered as he used to shiver. Or else it is some dream, a ray of light from paradise which has visited her in the darkness of her night. Yes, it was his very self ; they were both walking along some familiar walk in their little garden. There was nothing extraordinary about it, no transports. In fact, it was as if they had never been separated at all. They chatted about one thing and the other, with a smile, a jest,

as they might yesterday, as they might to-morrow. And when the widow wakes, her lips do not part with a groan of desolation; no, she has repossessed herself of her loved one's image; she will meet his own self again ere long; she has gained strength to go on her solitary way.

Paul sighs, waiting for deliverance; *to wit, the redemption of the body.* He strives to attain to *the resurrection of the dead.* His full conviction is, that the same Spirit which raised Christ will also *quicken our mortal bodies.* And it is this very Paul, whom certainly no one could accuse of self-indulgence, or idolatrous tenderness for his own person, who proclaims a new and startling truth, which many would be disposed to treat as blasphemous: "The Lord is *for the body!*"

The resurrection of the body strikes you, you tell me, as unseemly! I feel it sublime. It not only makes my heart beat with joy, but perfectly satisfies my moral sense.

The annals of past ages show me Christians who suffered in their body for the sake of their faith. I see martyrs steeping the Roman arenas with their blood; I see the fearful torches that lit the feasts of Nero; I see funeral piles, and on them human forms slowly consuming; from out the torturing flames I hear hymns of joy and praise to God; nay, at the very moment I am writing, the vail of obscure circumstance can not quite hide the privations, the watchings, the long journeys, the hard labor, that humble believers cheerfully undertake for the love of God. And shall the body which has suffered, sacrificed itself thus, have no portion in the kingdom of heaven?

O, yes! Its sure place is prepared there; no power can reverse the decree.

He who will raise the whole creation, will raise the body.

Resurrection! Admirable word. Any other would have left some anxiety undispeled; this word meets my most secret fears.

Who is it that rises? The dead man they laid in the tomb.

However dark, however suffering my night may have been, each morning I rise.

That morning my beloved will rise, he himself, and not another. It is not a new creation; it is a resurrection. In the place of the beloved departed, whose image my heart keeps so faithfully, God will not give me some unknown being; no, God will raise up the one I love; my hope will not be deceived. Amidst that dust and ashes—O, omnipotence of the Divine compassion!—a germ, visible to my God alone, incloses the vitality I believed forever extinct. As a grain of corn, buried deep in some furrow, rises as a green fresh blade to cheer my eyes and heart, so, clothed upon with a body, glorious, incorruptible, like to that of Jesus, who rose long before—so will the body of my loved one rise.

April is smiling at the earth. Come, stoop down. Close to the old wall, do you see a broad leaf spread itself out like a canopy, beneath it a blue vase filled full of spring-tide fragrance? It is the violet. Take hold of that branch, and break it: wood, mere dead wood, you say. Look closer: it reddens, it swells; here are pink petals, crests of balmy stamens; it is the blossom of the apple-tree. Take that other branch, dead, too, like the other; a cluster springs from it, golden, butterfly-winged—it is the laburnum. This other is burst open by a white candelabrum, with scarlet touches—it is the horse-chestnut. Death made all these branches much alike. Infinitely varied in life; each with its own special scent and sheen, they open out full to the sunshine, and cast their sweetness on the merry breeze.

During one night, one shower, the brown field is transformed into a meadow, rifled by the bee, the butterfly, myriads of lately-tranced and crawling things have changed into the winged hosts of the air.

What do these miracles say to you? To me they say that a God of love will raise up our dead.

“But how? with what semblance?”

St. Paul will tell you. "Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonor, raised in glory."

It was fragile and abject once; now Jesus clothes it with immortality and beauty.

Beauty! But those who were ugly, irredeemably ugly. And at once some luckless face comes and grimaces before our mind's eye.

Yet, when we come to think earnestly about the matter, is there indeed such a thing as irredeemable ugliness? Do features only make the face, or is it not rather the soul that shines through it?

Take for example any misshapen face you will. Deprive it of mind, it is hideous; you turn away from it at once. But let an idea shine through that ugly mask, you look at it without repugnance. Let it be animated by a noble sentiment, the flame rises, lights it up, you are irresistibly attracted, you contemplate it with pleasure. Let love, a pure, generous love, cast its radiance over that face—do not smile—I tell you that face will become beautiful.

You must surely have seen this wondrous transfiguration of which I speak. Yes; there comes one hour, the only one, perhaps, during a whole lifetime, when the ugliest man or woman among us grows beautiful. An hour of strong passion, elevating excitement; an hour when the soul reigns supreme. And if that soul be beautiful, why, the face is beautiful too. You read eternal redemption on the brow, in letters of sacred fire.

Again, death has revelations such as this. You who have seen a beloved one die, you are familiar with a transformation that yet did not interfere with his identity, that left him still your own.

You remember well—do you not?—the serene radiance of his expression. You beheld his face as it were that of an angel. Such was the aspect Stephen wore, when they stoned him as he kneeled, and in the open heavens saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

But when the last breath is drawn, what dignity, what

ineffable serenity! The body has suffered much. It was old, perhaps infirm, very wretched in every way. Death comes; and an ideal youth, the youth of immortality, descends upon the brow.

There are flowers which only yield their fragrance to the night; there are faces whose beauty only fully opens out in death. No more wrinkles; no drawn, distorted lineaments; an expression of extreme humility, blended with gladness of hope; a serene brightness; and an ideal straightening of the outline, as if the Divine finger, source of supreme beauty, had been laid there. You can not take your eyes away. Dead, your loved one consoles you for the agony of having seen him suffer. His face, his inexpressible grandeur, his smile—all say to you, “Believe; yet a little while, and thou shalt see me again.”

I am about to relate to you one of the strong emotions of my life. I found myself in the crypt of a church at Palermo. My friends and I had gone down into it without exactly knowing where we went, and walked, with more of surprise than terror, between a double line of skeletons. And yet the spectacle was ghastly enough. Those perpendicular dead bodies, dressed in brown garments, that hung loosely around their bony limbs, with crossed hands, holding some sort of shield, with their names written on it, had fallen into dislocated attitudes, even more grotesque than horrible. The portals of our Gothic cathedrals have no representations that equal this. And yet we were not conscious of any terror. Death presented us, indeed, with his material aspect, his sad, repulsive aspect, but the likeness of humanity is still there.

With one word, we felt God could call those dry bones to life again.

The next chamber had a more appalling spectacle in reserve. All along the walls—as in the cabin of some great ship—were ranged berths of equal length, and on these, dressed in gorgeous attire, hands gloved, lay the corpses of women, with discolored faces, empty eye-sockets, sunken

features, hollow mouths, and wreaths of roses on their heads. There were hundreds upon hundreds of them, in all the pomp of their court dresses, and a nauseating smell, the cold, faint smell of death, rose from the vaults where the bodies were drying.

In the presence of these faces with their beauties so inexorably destroyed, of this ghastly satire on worldly vanities, I felt my blood congeal. But when at the end of the passage, lit by our guide's torch, a well yawned before us, and he lowered the red and smoking light he held to show it better; when I saw that nameless *detritus*, damp, pestilential, which overflowed the well's mouth, and when our guide said, "This is the dust of those yonder; when they have lain there their time, we throw them in here," I remained almost lifeless with horror.

With my hand half plunged in those ashes, looking at what they had left on my fingers, a despairing doubt flashed blightingly across my soul.

As I fled in haste from that fatal crypt, and mounted with unsteady step the stair that led us back into the nave, just where the daylight began to appear, I suddenly saw four letters carved on the wall, I. N. R. I. Then a voice sounded very near my heart, "*Believest thou that I am able to do this?*"

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, yea verily thou wilt do it!

From that day I have never for a moment doubted of the resurrection of the dead!—*Madame Gasparin.*



THE FATAL NIAGARA FLOWER.

"Without remedy, suddenly shall he be broken." PROVERBS VI, 15.

TRAVELERS who visit the Falls of Niagara, are directed to a spot on the margin of the precipice, over the boiling current below, where a gay young lady a few years since lost her life. She was delighted with the wonders of the

unrivalled scene, and ambitious to pluck a flower from a cliff where no human hand had before ventured, as a memorial of the cataract and her own daring, she leaned over the verge, and caught a glimpse of the surging waters far down the battlement of rocks, while fear for a moment darkened her excited mind. But there hung the lovely blossom upon which her heart was fixed; and she leaned in a delirium of intense desire and anticipation over the brink. Her arm was outstretched to grasp the beautiful flower which charmed her fancy; the turf yielded to the pressure of her light feet, and with a shriek she descended like a fallen star to the rocky shore, and was borne away gasping in death. How impressively does the tragical event illustrate the way in which a majority of impenitent sinners perish forever! It is not a deliberate purpose to neglect salvation; but in pursuit of imaginary good, fascinated with pleasing objects just in the future, they lightly, ambitiously, and insanely venture too far. They sometimes fear the result of desired wealth or pleasure; they sometimes hear the thunder of eternity's deep, and recoil a moment from the allurements of sin; but the solemn pause is brief, the onward step is taken, the fancied treasure is in the grasp, when a despairing cry comes up from Jordan's wave, and the soul sinks into the arms of the second death. O, every hour life's sands are sliding from beneath incautious feet, and with sin's fatal flower in the unconscious hand, the trifler goes to his doom. The requiem of such a departure is an echo of the Savior's question, "What shall a man give in *exchange* for his soul?"

THE HAND THAT SAVES US.

"How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."
ROMANS XII, 33.

Two painters were employed to fresco the walls of a magnificent cathedral; both stood on a rude scaffolding con-

structed for the purpose, some forty feet from the floor. One of them was so intent upon his work, that he became wholly absorbed, and in admiration stood off from the picture, gazing at it with intense delight. Forgetting where he was, he moved back slowly, surveying critically the work of his pencil, till he had neared the edge of the plank upon which he stood. At this critical moment his companion turned suddenly, and, almost frozen with horror, beheld his imminent peril; another instant, and the enthusiast would be precipitated upon the pavement beneath. If he spoke to him it was certain death; if he held his peace death was equally sure. Suddenly he regained his presence of mind, and seizing a wet brush, flung it against the wall, spattering the beautiful picture with unsightly blotches of coloring. The painter flew forward, and turned upon his friend with fierce upbraidings; but startled at his ghastly face, he listened to his recital of danger, looked shuddering over the dread space below, and with tears of gratitude blessed the hand that saved him. Just so, we sometimes get absorbed upon the pictures of the world, and, in contemplating them, step backward, unconscious of our peril, when the Almighty, in mercy, dashes out the beautiful images, and draws us, at the time we are complaining of his dealing, into his outstretched arms of compassion and love.



MY RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

"He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."
PSALM XL, 3.

I WAS a child of teaching and prayer; I was reared in the household of faith; I knew the Catechism as it was taught; I was instructed in the Scriptures as they were expounded from the pulpit, and read by men; and yet, till after I was twenty-one years old, I groped without the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. I know not what the tablets of eternity have written down, but I think that

when I stand in Zion, and before God, the brightest thing which I shall look back upon will be that blessed morning of May when it pleased God to reveal to my wandering soul the idea that it was his nature to love a man in his sins for the sake of helping him out of them; in short, that he felt toward me as my mother felt toward me, to whose eyes my wrong doing brought tears, who never pressed me so close to her as when I had done wrong, and who would fain, with her yearning love, lift me out of trouble. And when I found that it was Christ's nature to lift men out of weakness to strength, out of impurity to goodness, out of every thing low and debasing to superiority, I felt that I had found a God. I shall never forget the feelings with which I walked forth that May morning. The golden pavements will never feel to my feet as then the grass felt to them; and the singing of the birds in the woods—for I roamed in the woods—was cacophonous to the sweet music of my thoughts; and there were no forms in the universe which seemed to me graceful enough to represent the Being, a conception of whose character had just dawned upon my mind. I felt, when I had, with the Psalmist, called upon the heavens, the earth, the mountains, the streams, the floods, the birds, the beasts, and universal being to praise God, that I had called upon nothing that could praise him enough for the revelation of such a nature as that in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Time went on, and next came the disclosure of a Christ ever present with me; a Christ that never was far from me, but was always near me, as a companion and friend, to uphold and sustain me. This was the last and the best revelation of God's Spirit to my soul. It is only when the soul measures itself down deep, and says, "I am all selfish, and proud, and weak, and easy to be tempted to wrong; I have a glimmering sense of the right, and to-day I promise God that I will follow it; but to-morrow I turn the promise into sin; to-day I lift up myself with

resolutions, but to-morrow I sink down with discouragement; there is nothing for me that is good; from the crown of my head to the sole of my feet I am full of wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores;" it is only then that a man has passed through death to life, from darkness to light, from sorrow to joy.—*H. W. Beecher.*

A NEW YEAR.

"I have been young, and now am old." PSALM XXXVII, 25.

WHEN we pass the frontiers of a new country they stop us at once and demand our passport. They look to see whence the traveler has come and whither he is going; and every thing reminds us of the transition. The dress of the people is peculiar. Their language is strange. The streets and houses, the conveyances, the style of every thing is new. And often the features of the landscape are foreign. Unwonted crops grow in the fields, and unfamiliar trees stand in the hedgerows, and quaint and unaccountable creatures flit over our head or hurry across our path. And at any given moment we have only to look up, in order to remember, "This is no more my native land; this is no longer the country in which I woke up yesterday."

But marked and conspicuous as is our progress in *space*, we recognize no such decided transitions in our progress through *time*. When we pass the frontiers of a new year, there is no one there with authority to demand our passport; no one who forcibly arrests us, and asks, "Whence comest thou? or, Whither art thou going? Art thou bound for the better country, and hast thou a safe conduct in the name of the Lord of the land?" But we just pass on—'60, '61, '62, '63—and every year repeats, "*We* demand no passport; be sure you can show it at the journey's end, for it is certain to be needed there." And as nothing stops us at the border, so in the new year itself there is nothing distinguishable from the year that went

before. The sun rises and the sun sets. Our friends are around us all the same. We ply our business or amusements just as we did before, and all things continue as they were. And it is the same with the more signal epochs. The infant passes on to childhood, and the child to youth, and the youth to manhood, and the man to old age, and he can hardly tell when or how he crossed the boundary. On our globes and maps we have lines to mark the parallels of distance; but these lines are only on the map. Crossing the equator or the tropic, we see no score in the water, no line in the sky to mark it; and the vessel gives no lurch, no alarum sounds from the welkin, no call is emitted from the deep: and it is only the man of skill, the pilot or the captain, with his eye on the signs of heaven, who can tell that an event has happened, and that a definite portion of the voyage is completed. And so far, our life is like a voyage on an open sea, every day repeating its predecessor—the same watery plain around, and the same blue dome above—each so like the other that we might fancy the charmed ship was standing still. But it is not so. The watery plain of to-day is far in advance of the plain of yesterday, and the blue dome of to-day may be very like its predecessors, but it is fashioned from quite another sky.

However, it is easy to see how insidious this process is, and how illusive might be the consequence. Imagine that in the ship were some passengers—a few young men, candidates for an important post in a distant empire. They may reasonably calculate on the voyage lasting three months or four; and, provided that before their arrival they have acquired a certain science, or learned a competent amount of a given language, they will instantly be promoted to a lucrative and honorable appointment. The first few days are lost in the bustle of setting all to rights, in regrets, and plans, and projects. But at last one or two settle down in solid earnest, and betake themselves to the study of the all-important subject, and have not been at it long till they alight on the key which makes their after-

progress easy and delightful. To them the voyage is not irksome, and the end is full of expectation. But their comrades pass their time in idleness. They play cards, and smoke, and read romances, and invent all sorts of frolics to while away the tedium of captivity; and if a more sober companion venture to remonstrate, they exclaim, "Lots of time! Do you see any signs of land? True, we have been out of port six weeks; but it does not feel to me as if we had moved a hundred miles. Besides, man, we have first to pass the Cape, and after that we may manage very well." And thus on it goes, till one morning there is a loud huzza, and every passenger springs on deck. "Land ahead!" "What land?" "Why, the land to which we all are bound." "Impossible; we have not passed the Cape." "Yes, indeed; but we did not put in there. Yonder is the coast. We shall drop anchor to-night, and must get on shore to-morrow." And then you may see how blank and pale the faces of the loiterers are. They feel that all is lost. One takes up the neglected volume, and wonders whether any thing may be done in the remaining hours; but it all looks so strange and intricate, that in despair he flings it down. "To-morrow is the examination-day. To-morrow is the day of trial. It is no use now. I have played the fool, and lost my opportunity;" while their wiser friends lift up their hearts with joy, because their promotion draweth nigh. With no trepidation, except so much as every thoughtful spirit feels when a solemn event is near, without foreboding and without levity, they look forth to the nearer towers and brightening minarets of that famed city, which has been the goal of many wishes, and the home of many a dream. And as they calmly get ready for the hour of landing, the only sorrow that they feel is for their heedless companions, who have lost the returnless opportunity to make their calling and election sure.

So, dear reader, in this bark of earthly existence we are floating onward to the great eternity; and there is a certain lesson given us to learn in order to secure a welcome and a

high promotion whenever we arrive. But from the subtile illusion already indicated, few address themselves to that great study betimes. Few so "number their days as to apply their hearts to heavenly wisdom." Each day looks so like the other—yesterday as lifelike as the day before, and the present day as hale and hopeful as either, that it becomes quite natural to say, "To-morrow will be as this day, and much more abundant." And so the golden moments glide away. One is constantly adjusting his berth, and finds new employment every day in making it more comfortable or more complete; and he will, perhaps, be so engaged the night when the anchor drops and the sails are furled. And many more amuse themselves. They take up the volume which contains the grand lesson, and look a few minutes at it, and put it past, and skip away to some favorite diversion; while they know full well, or fear too sadly, that they have not reached the main secret yet.

Our great business is to get acquainted with God, and so to become fit for his presence in the realms of light and purity. His friendly disposition he has announced in the Gospel of his grace; and when that announcement has subdued us into love and obedience, we are new creatures. As soon as we can say, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him," a dreadful burden will be removed from our conscience, and it will be no longer with an anxious foreboding that we shall contemplate the end of the voyage. The announcement, that we *this day* cross another parallel, need cause us no perturbation; and, waking from this night's slumber, should we hear the hurrying footsteps and unfamiliar voices which bespeak the vessel come to port, we may calmly arise and make ready, for our Friend is there already, and has prepared a place for us, and we shall find it all homelike and congenial.

Who is there of us that has not made preparation to leave the ship with a shout of joy, and to enjoy the better land forever?

THE HUMMING-BIRD AND THE EAGLE.

"Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai, the Jew, sitting at the King's gate." ESTHER VI, 13.

I RECALL a picture I once saw in a public gallery. It was a scene in the higher Alps. A noble eagle was in flight, and scores of birds were pursuing him. The hawks and other larger birds he could keep at a distance, as whenever they came near he tore them with his claws, or struck them with his beak. Some humming-birds had joined the others in an attack on the eagle, one of them scarcely visible in the picture, so tiny a thing is it in comparison with the king of birds, was sitting on his head, pecking away, and scattering the feathers as the eagle soared higher. Naturalists tell us that sometimes the humming-bird will so peck the head, and injure the brain of the eagle as to cause his death, while seldom, or never in a fair fight with larger birds is he injured. The humming-bird is small, and has a small beak, and but little strength; but sitting on the vital part, and constantly teasing, he very frequently accomplishes his work of death. The eagle can not bite or claw him, and he has not the presence of mind to dip his head in the sea, and thus drown his pursuer.

How often is it the case that we allow little things to annoy us, to destroy our peace, and our happiness, and health! Great troubles we go out and meet, and with men to applaud us for our heroism, we conquer; but little things, humming-bird troubles, get near our heart, and we know not how to shake them off. It is related by a London physician of a patient whom he was attending, that he was a great beauty. By some accident, one of his hands was the victim of a malformation. The thing troubled the man day and night, and his health began to fail. He could not bear to have fingers so white and graceful disfigured. "My patient," says the Doctor, "was also suffering from a disease that I knew, and he knew, would ultimately be fatal. This, however, did not seem to trouble

him. It was his maimed left hand that haunted him everywhere, and concerning which he made perpetual complaint to me. At length he was taken with a fever, traceable, in a measure, to his unhappy frame of mind, and in a few days died."

SKILL IN SOUL-SAVING.

"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."
1 CORINTHIANS IX, 22.

A PROUD, passionate sinner once moved into the neighborhood of a devoted minister, and began a career of sin which grieved the good and increased the corruption of the wicked. His avowed purpose to insult any preacher who should presume to address him kept the minister from calling upon him at once, but did not prevent him from prayerfully watching for an opportunity.

This came sooner than he expected. The blaspheming sinner was struck down by severe sickness. "I will see him," said the minister.

"If you do he will insult you," said the friend who had informed him of the man's sickness.

"I will see him, nevertheless, and look to God for guidance and blessing," replied the minister.

Accordingly he called and was shown into a parlor, where he found the sick man lying on an old sofa. With great kindness he asked after his health, and received curt, almost uncivil replies. Then, without saying one word of his own respecting religion, he opened his Bible and said:

"If you please, I will read to you?"

Without waiting for a reply, he proceeded to read the words of Jesus in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, after which he offered a short, simple prayer, bade the man farewell, and left.

The next day he called again, read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, prayed, and left as before. This was repeated several days. Kindness, appropriate selections from the

Word of God, prayer, in which the minister carefully *classed himself with the sick man as needing mercy*, and secret prayer for God's blessing, were the only weapons employed.

After two weeks the sick man broke down, grasped the minister's hands, wept, confessed himself a sinner, and said he was a wonder to himself.

"It is of God," replied the minister; "I have not spoken a word. God has spoken. He has done this."

"Yes," said the man, "I see it now. If you had spoken
• a single word of your own to me when first you came, or for some time after, I would not have borne it. Weak as I was I should have tried to turn you out of my house. I was astonished at your daring to come to me. You took me by surprise. I could not be angry when you asked with such kind voice after my health. You read me those beautiful words. I knew they were not your own words, but God's own words, and I was silent. You shut the book, and I thought you would begin to reproach me and tell me what a sinful wretch I was, and then would be my time to speak; but I looked up and saw you on your knees, and heard you praying for me, and then, without another word, you were gone."

It is enough to add that this Anakim among sinners was soon after converted, and after a few weeks of beautiful devotedness to Jesus, passed through the gates of the grave, crying victory through the blood of the Lamb.

That this sinner was pulled out of the burning by the *skill*, as well as by the fidelity of the minister, is placed beyond all doubt by the testimony of the man himself. Faithfulness alone would not have succeeded, but *faithfulness joined to skill* did the work.

Of a New England Congregationalist minister it is said: In his parish he excelled in finding access to the opposers of truth. He employed his winning address in attracting to the fold that "one sheep," which had been given up as lost. The most irreligious men learned to receive kindly his plainest reprimand. A parishioner, *forgetful* of the

fourth commandment, once brought a present to him on Sabbath evening. The pastor refused to accept it, and bestowed on the donor a wholesome lecture for not "*remembering the Sabbath day.*" The man was humbled, but *insisted on leaving his present.*

In the College and at the Seminary, he loved to spend his strength in doing *that kind of good which other men neglected.* This remained his characteristic through life.

The thousands who have dropped outside the sway of the ordinary means of grace, must be reached—if at all—by somebody's "*doing the work which other men have neglected.*" Somebody, with real love for souls, must set himself in every precinct, to win back that "*one sheep,*" which had been given up as lost.



ELIZA GARNAUT—THE WOMAN OF ONE WORK.

"A burning and a shining light." JOHN V, 35.

MRS. GARNAUT was the second daughter of John and Ann Jones, and was born at Swansea, Wales, the eighth day of April, 1810. Those of us who knew her, feel it impossible to tell her worth, while the words which to us are tame and halting, will be read by strangers as the usual exaggeration of an obituary. I knew her long and intimately, and though it has been my lot to know many rare and devoted men and women, I can truthfully say, the sight of her daily life has enlarged my idea of the reach of human virtue. I am indebted to her for a new lesson of practical Christianity, and I read now the instance of singular heroism and disinterestedness with anointed eyes. While she was at school near Bath, her parents died, leaving to her care an elder sister, then sinking in consumption, and a brother and three sisters younger than herself. To these she was father, mother, brother, and sister, watching over their interest and devoted to their welfare till years separated them to various fortunes. Subsequently she married Richard Gar-

naut, the son of a French emigrant, a mechanic of great taste and ability. They came immediately to America, and finally settled in Boston, where, not three years after marriage, she lost her husband and eldest child. Left alone with her infant, in a strange land, without means, and with very few friends, she manifested the same energy and trustfulness, the same putting aside of all regard for her own comfort and profit, which made her last years so efficient and beautiful. After an interval, she connected herself with the Moral Reform Society of Boston, and labored in its cause for many years; and when worn out by the varied efforts which her restless benevolence, added to the care and confinement of the office she held, became Matron of the Home, established in Albany-street, for the shelter of orphan and destitute children. Exhausted by watching over the two infants of a woman who had died of the cholera, with no hope of saving them, but with all the tenderness of a mother's love, she fell herself a victim to the disease, on Monday, the third of September, 1849.

This is the outline of a long life crowded into few years, whose every day was filled with more acts of love and service to others, than most of even the devotedly benevolent are able or privileged to do in years.

The societies with which she was connected were devoted to special objects; not so her heart. Her ceaseless activity made light of cares, which were enough for the whole strength and the whole twelve hours of others; and found leisure to seek out and relieve all kinds of distress. Hers was practical doing of good, and no service was too humble for her to perform. Children left in cellars by drunken parents, and brought to her so loathsome and diseased that other benevolent institutions, though rich in municipal bounty, refused to take them in, she received; not to give them to domestics—she had none—but to wash, tend, cure, and serve herself. Women and young persons for whom John Augustus could find no shelter elsewhere, he carried without a doubt to her; and in those many cases where a

woman's influence and aid are indispensable, Mrs. Garnaut was his adviser and companion. To the forsaken victim of seduction or temptation, she has again and again given up her own room and bed, hoping that, if under her eye, she could strengthen their faltering resolution, and give them back to reconciled families. Again and again deceived, she has gone on with loving patience, and been rewarded at last with abundant success. Women ruined by intemperance, and passing almost all their time in the House of Correction, fled to her for refuge from themselves; and lived usefully and virtuously after struggles and falls which would have tired out any heart and any faith but hers. In hundreds of towns are little ones, whom her exertions have saved from utter neglect or the worst influence of abandoned parents, and provided with homes and instruction. Insane girls, for whom she has found one shelter after another, from which morbid suspicions would drive them, always came back to her and rested content while under her roof. The morning after her death it was pitiful to witness the bitter grief of homeless and friendless persons, gathered by the news, who felt that they had lost both parent and friend. She died watching over what all saw were the death-beds of children, stricken with a disease from which so many fled, and whose parents she had never seen; and in this, her death was the exact type of a life, given, so much of it, to those who, from vice or extreme youth, could not repay her even with gratitude.

A young woman, she put aside all thoughts of insult or danger to herself in reaching any she sought to save. Strong in a good purpose, she entered fearlessly, alone, the most abandoned haunts of vice, ventured on ship-board at night, to snatch a victim from certain ruin, and, plain in speech, feared neither station nor wealth in her rebuke.

Wherever Mrs. Garnaut was, might be said to be the vanguard of benevolent effort. Was her Society devoted to children, still she could not shut her door to want, even in adults. The emigrant who had neither acquaintances

nor work, the criminal who needed aid, the sick woman, were all sheltered, or visited, or provided for. Many years of devoted labor had made her known to a large circle of friendless beings, and in every new trouble they fled to her. While engaged in moral reform, she did as much for the intemperate, and gave her nights to sick chambers, where, save her unwearied love, none but the physician ever entered. Before the most loathsome disease, in the presence of the most resolute vice, neither her faith nor her love ever faltered. When others thought they had done enough, and gave up, she still persevered, forgiving seventy times seven; and the poor wanderer seemed to feel there was one heart that would never be closed against her, and in every passing hour of virtuous resolution sought her, with full assurance of sympathy and aid, like a child who knows that a mother will never cease to hope. Much doubtless was owing to manners, whose fascination was recognized by every one who came within their influence. They were the fitting expression of a heart overflowing with love for every human being.

Her own means, the little presents to her child, the compensation paid her, were used to enable the institution she controlled to go on; and they were given away as freely as the funds specially committed to her for distribution. She never looked upon any thing as her own. Dr. Follen has made a beautiful use of the sculpture of St. Martin sharing his cloak with a beggar. The emigrant, the intemperate woman just reformed, both too poorly clad to get places, the sick girl without friends or means, for whom this loving stranger has taken the shawl from her own shoulders, and the shoes from her own feet, could have pointed to a daily practice of the same love.

Her life was cheered with some testimonies of gratitude, and a thousand histories of touching interest lie buried in her grave. She was a child to the last in her undoubting faith, in her entire unconsciousness of her own peculiar traits, and in the joyousness of her spirits. But though a

child in her love and her unselfishness, she was profoundly alive to all the great questions of reform and social improvement. Endowed with good intellectual ability, sound practical sense, rare judgment, sagacity that few could deceive, she probed every case, and did, what she did, intelligently. Taken early from school, life had been her only education, and with no leisure for books, she had learned through her affections; and here, as our wisest statesman has said, "the heart was the best logician." She saw the right with the unerring intuition of a good heart. Neither sect, class, color, or country affected her feeling.

Bereaved in so many of her relations, separated from her kindred, constantly in the presence of so much sickness and want, she was yet always young, the sunshine of any circle, enjoying life intensely, happy under all circumstances, full of health, her day perpetual gladness, as if the pathway had been as full of heaven as the heart that trod it.

We say of some, and very truly, that theirs is a Christian life; but it is very rare, that, as in this case, the traits of any one are so unalloyed as actually to remind us of, to recall the traits of the great Master. I never knew one so unconsciously penetrated with the thought that she "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." She was literally "careful for nothing," but like Luther's bird, rested all her interests on the Infinite Love, after which her own life and spirit were so closely copied.

The marked peculiarity of her character was this entire giving up of herself to others, and the beauty of her perfect unconsciousness of it. We see many unselfish, many disinterested, many devoted persons. But neither word, nor all combined, at all describe Mrs. Garnaut. What others do with effort, or, at most, from a sense of duty, in her seemed nature. Yet not the heedless generosity of childhood or sentiment, but the harmonious working of a nature which existed *only to serve others* as naturally as a tree grows. So utterly unconscious was she of this active and unceasing devotedness, that she neither seemed to think her-

self different from others, or to deem they ought to leave the usual way of the world to be like her.

She had that rare union, great tenderness and great firmness of character. Though her heart bled at the sight of woe, she yet faced and alleviated sufferings of the most horrid description with a spirit full of courage and hope.

She died, worn out, doing all her kind heart dictated, and all the wretched needed, but more than one person's strength, or the means placed in her hands were sufficient for. She felt she had herself still to give, and died in the sacrifice. All this so feebly described, was the work of one young woman, left in a strange land, without means and without friends. Those who knew her, have the joy of remembering that they did not entertain this angel unawares.

As was said of the good English Bishop: "Surely the life of one like this ought not to be forgotten. I, who saw and heard so much of it, shall, I trust, never recollect it without being better for it. And if I can succeed in showing it so truly to the world that they also may be the better for it, I shall do them an acceptable service."—*W. Phillips*.



THE GOLD-DIGGER IN THE SEA.

"All that a man hath will he give for his life." JOB II, 4.

CONVINCE a man that the only way to save his life is to part with his limb, and he does not hesitate an instant between living with one limb, and being buried with two. Borne in the operating theater, pale, yet resolute, he bares the diseased member to the knife. And how well does that bleeding, fainting, groaning, sufferer, teach us to part with our sins, rather than with our Savior! If life is better than a limb, how much better is heaven than a sin!

Two years ago a man was called to decide between preserving his life, and parting with the gains of his lifetime. A gold-digger, he stood on the deck of a ship that, coming from Australian shores, had—as some all but reach heaven—

all but reached her harbor in safety. The exiles had been coasting along their native shores; and to-morrow, husbands would embrace their wives, children their parents, and not a few realize the bright dream of returning to pass the evening of their days in happiness amid the loved scenes of their youth. But as the proverb runs, there is much between the cup and the lip. Night came lowering down; and with the night a storm that wrecked ship, and hopes, and fortunes, all together. The dawning light but revealed a scene of horror—death staring them in the face. The sea, lashed into fury, ran mountains high; no boat could live in her. One chance still remained. Pale women, weeping children, feeble and timid men, must die; but a stout, brave swimmer, with trust in God, and disincumbered of all impediments, might reach the shore, where hundreds stood ready to dash into the boiling surf, and seizing, save him. One man was observed to go below. He bound around his waist a heavy belt, filled with gold, the hard gains of his life, and returned to the deck. One after another he saw his fellow-passengers leap overboard. After a brief but terrible struggle, head after head went down—sunk by the gold they had fought hard to gain, and were loth to lose. Slowly he was seen to unbuckle his belt. His hopes had been bound up in it. It was to buy him land, and ease, and respect—the reward of long years of hard and weary exile. What hardships he had endured for it! The sweat of his brow, the hopes of day and the dreams of night were there. If he parts with it, he is a beggar; and then if he keeps it, he dies. He poised it in his hand; balanced it for a while; took a long, sad look at it; and then with one strong, desperate effort, flung it far out into the roaring sea. Wise man! It sinks with a sullen plunge; and now he follows it—not to sink, but, disincumbered of its weight, to swim; to beat the billows manfully; and, riding on the foaming surge, to reach the shore. Well done, brave gold-digger! Ay, well done, and well chosen; but if “a man,” as the devil said, who for once spoke

God's truth, "will give all that he hath for his life," how much more should he give all he hath for his soul? Better to part with gold than with God; to bear the heaviest cross than miss a heavenly crown.

BURYING A STUBBORN MONK.

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" ACTS IX. 6.

THERE is a memorable passage in the history of St. Francis that may throw light on this subject. The grand rule of the order which he founded, was implicit submission to the superior. One day a monk proved refractory. He must be subdued. By order of St. Francis, a grave was dug deep enough to hold a man; the monk was put into it; the brothers began to shovel in the earth; while their superior, standing by, looked on stern as death. When the mold had reached the wretch's knees, St. Francis bent down, and fixing his eye on him, said, "Are you dead yet—is your self-will dead—do you yield?" There was no answer; down in that grave there seemed to stand a man with a will as iron as his own. The signal was given, and the burial went on. When at length he was buried up to the middle, to the neck, to the lips, St. Francis bent down once more to repeat the question, "Are you dead yet?" The monk lifted his eye to his superior to see in the cold, gray eyes that were fixed on him no spark of human feeling. Dead to pity, and all the weaknesses of humanity, St. Francis stood ready to give the signal that should finish the burial. It was not needed; the iron bent; he was vanquished; the funeral was stopped; his will yielding to a stronger, the poor brother said, "I am dead."

I would not be dead as these monks to any man. The mind and reason which I have got from God Almighty are to bend implicitly and blindly before no human authority. But the submission I refuse to man, Jesus, I

give to thee—not wrung from me by terror, but won by love; the result not of fear, but of gratitude. I wish to be dead, not as that monk, but as he who said, I am dead; “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live.” Saul, the persecutor, was dead; but Paul, the great apostle, lived. Yet not I, he adds, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

MAN AN EXILE FROM GOD.

“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” ROMANS III, 11.

DURING the French-Indian wars, a party of Indians made an attack on a Moravian cottage in North-Eastern Pennsylvania, at the time of family worship, and succeeded in carrying off a little girl of three or four years of age. Season after season the parents of the child endeavored to discover her, but in vain. Ten years, however, had passed, when it was reported that a white girl, very weather-beaten and worn, had been captured from some Indians in the neighborhood of Pittsburg. The mother of the lost girl proceeded there, but was unable to recognize in the captive any traces of her own child. At last she bethought her of the hymn tune that was sung on the fatal evening of the Indian descent. She began to sing it, and at once the mass of superincumbent rubbish on the child’s memory was removed. The far past became the immediate present, and the exile was recalled home.

There is something like this in the ordinary human consciousness. There are phenomena which it is hard to account for except on the supposition that man has a Heavenly Father, but that from that Father’s home he is now banished. He speaks not, at least in his normal condition, the language of heaven, and yet that language awakens in him strange memories. Even without revelation he wor-

ships an unknown God. He has memories, subtile and strange, that call back the language of a lost home. There is an almost universal consciousness that a God exists, and yet there is a feeling that the avenues to that God's throne are blocked. So it is with all, from the polished Greek, who erects a temple even to the deities of the stranger and the outcast, to the rude Indian, who worships God in tree and wind.

This banishment from God of man does not, it is submitted, arise from any inability of his merely-intellectual powers. These he possesses amply enough for even indefinite comprehension; for time and space form no barrier to human intellect. It takes, it is said, two millions of years for the rays of the most distant of the recently-discovered stars to reach us; the human mind conceives of and pictures to itself such a star in an instant. And, to show the triumph of intellect over the material it uses, matter itself is the agent by which matter is to be subdued. A bit of glass, on the one hand, expands an atom into worlds, and, on the other hand, uncovers worlds to an atom. Steel, in one form, carves on stone, or traces on paper, or restores from the geological record the history of remote ages; on the other, it brings the thoughts of continents together in one common pulse. Through this, century answereth to century; land to land; sea to sea. When we see such an agency as this, indefinite in its power of reaching over time and space, dropping helpless at the mere approach to the throne of the Most High; when we see how that avenue is covered with the broken fragments of the speculations of intellects the boldest and strongest, we may well believe that there has been here some great disruption that has severed man from his God, and driven him an exile from a heavenly home. It is as if, by a deserted telegraph line, we see the posts fallen, and the wires lying tangled and broken on the ground. We can well believe that once the magnetic fluid passed through that now broken wire. We can feel that the very point where we now stand was once brought into

immediate communication with the great centers of human society. Now, however, all that remains is a broken instrument, incapable itself of bearing a message, but significant of two great truths: first, former capacity for communication; and, second, a shock by which this capacity has been destroyed.

Now, are not these same phenomena observable in man? Do we not see, first, the remains of former grandeur, the traces of former communication and sympathy with God, of a heart that throbbed in reciprocal pulsation with that of the Most High himself? and do we not see, also, evidence of some great catastrophe by which this exquisite instrument was shattered? In other words, do we not find here the base of two great propositions which will go a great way toward solving these difficulties—an original creation in holiness and in unison with God, and a subsequent fall and perversion, followed by a judicial exile?

Take the ocean, and view it on one of its charts, and see how its face is marked with dangerous shoals, with sunken rocks, with stormy coasts. View, also, the iceberg; undoubtedly, as it sallies forth into Southern seas, a great mitigator of tropical heat, and yet, at the same time, as with its comrades it issues in grim procession from its fastnesses in the North, a remorseless devastator of whatever life or wealth it may happen to strike. In the silence and calm of a windless and currentless sea these gaunt and awful marauders of the ocean march onward, impelled, as it would seem, by some interior energy that propels them by its elemental force. The motive power, in fact, is one of those under-currents so essential to the due purification of the sea, which strikes the submerged base of the iceberg, generally so much greater than its glittering heights, and drives it onward with such tremendous power. It would seem as if these giant corsairs from the North are drawn by the force of currents to a special rendezvous at the "great bend" near latitude 43°. Here, touching the edge of the Gulf Stream, some of the most beneficent forces in

nature combine to invest them with peculiar peril. When under full head, a steamship would be overtaken by them, and woe to that vessel which comes into collision with their brilliant but pitiless bulwarks. Among the numberless vessels that have thus fallen may be placed two of the finest that modern skill has constructed—the President and the Pacific.

Take another illustration from the same quarter. The vessel bound from England to the Capes of the Delaware or Chesapeake is “met by snow-storms and gales which mock the seaman’s strength and set at naught his skill. In a little while his bark becomes a mass of ice; with her crew frosted and helpless, she remains obedient only to her helm, and is kept away for the Gulf Stream. After a few hours’ run, she reaches its edge, and, almost at the next bound, passes from the midst of Winter into a sea at Summer heat. Now the ice disappears from her apparel; the sailor bathes his stiffened limbs in tepid waters; feeling himself invigorated and refreshed with the genial warmth about him, he realizes, out there at sea, the fable of Antæus and his mother earth. He rises up and attempts to make his port again, and is again as rudely met and beaten back from the northward; but each time that he is driven off from the contest, he comes forth from this stream, like the ancient son of Neptune, stronger and stronger, till, after many days, his freshened strength prevails, and he at last triumphs and enters his haven in safety; though in this contest he sometimes falls to rise no more, for it is often terrible. Many ships annually founder in these gales.”

It is the same wherever man and the inanimate creation come in contact. Nature bears, it is true, the horn of plenty in the one hand, but she carries in the other the rod of discipline. The coal mine yields up its inexhaustible stores, but below issues a gas ready to poison or explode, and above beetles the earth, ready to fall in and bury. Mr. Huskisson is torn to pieces on a railway, which his clear head and resolute purpose led him to be foremost to appreciate and carry through; the great gun of the Princeton,

exhibited as one of the first products of mechanical art, bursts and destroys the chief of the very department under whose auspices the exhibition was made. Iron, proclaimed by the late Francis Horner to be the chief engine of modern civilization, is the great agency which produces by far the greater proportion of violent deaths. Even climate, while it marches forward, sowing the seeds of life, carries also a scythe by which, in the moist winds of Spring, the sultry heats of Summer, the bitter storms of Winter, multitudes are swept into their graves.

The inquiry then comes, is there any thing in the character of man, the only agent existing on the face of the earth as the subject of moral discipline, which can explain phenomena such as have been noticed? Let it be remembered that the analogies of science lead us to this very kind of inquiry. If the comparative anatomist, for instance, discovers an anomalous bone, he does not declare that here is an evidence of imperfection or caprice on the part of the Creator, but he looks to the properties of the specimen, and judges of the remainder of the animal by the peculiarities he thus observes. "This," he decides, "is the part of an animal that is graminivorous; that of one that is carnivorous." So it is with respect to the physical properties which certain atmospheres engender. We look at Jupiter, and, as we observe the tremendous pressure of the gravitation which bears upon his bottomless seas and his light soil, we conclude that, if he be populated at all, it must be by animals light of weight and strong of muscle. We turn to Saturn, and when we observe that his density is scarcely above that of cork, and that the amount of light and heat that reaches him is only a nineteenth of that of the earth, we conclude that his inhabitants, if possessed of the same type of organization as our own, must have the senses manifold more acute, and the sensibilities to the same degree more obtuse. We turn to Mars, and, as we find that the gravity at his surface is only half of that with us, we make allowance for a double bulk

on the part of those who dwell amid the sparkling snows which astronomers have been able to detect at his poles, or under the sultry clouds that float around his equator. In other words, instead of judging of the *Creator* from a section of the thing *created*, as some of those who have drawn these very conclusions would ask us to do, we judge of the thing created from such properties placed about it by the Creator as we are able to accept as a basis of examination.

Let us suppose that an inhabitant of one of these planets, after witnessing the scarred and corrugated moral atmosphere of our own globe; after seeing only fissures of sunlight through lowering banks of clouds; after seeing how crushingly grief or oppression gravitates the heart downward in one place, and how genially home and social influences unite in another to cheer and elevate it, and yet how certainly these influences are, sooner or later, destroyed; what would an intelligent observer be likely to conclude with regard to the moral character of those to whom this atmosphere was adjusted? Would not such an observer, after witnessing these phenomena, and noticing the marks of Divine wisdom and love rising superior to the whole, conclude that man is in a state of exile from God, continued on his part voluntarily, and accompanied by severe penalties—that home is meant to teach, and not to worship—and that all the mechanism of nature is so adapted as to instruct and discipline, but, at the same time, to prepare for another life?—*Prof. Wharton.*

THE BURDEN TOO HEAVY—WISHING TO DIE.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.” ECCLESIASTES IX, 10.

A MAN who had lost a dear child, the light and hope of his home, was met by a friend to whom he said: “There is now

nothing left for me to do. I have no desire of life, no inclination to mingle further in its duties. I want to lie by the side of my boy." The friend heard him through, and expressed his warmest sympathy. Subsequently he placed in his hands an envelope inclosing these lines :

" Why do'st thou talk of death, laddie ?

Why do'st thou long to go ?

The Master that placed thee here

Hath work for thee to do.

Why do'st thou talk of heaven, laddie ?

What would'st thou say in heaven

When the Master asks, ' What hast thou done

With the talents I have given ?

I gave thee wit and eloquence,

Thy brother to persuade ;

Where are the thousands by thy word

More wise and holy made ?

I gave thee wealth and power,

And the poor around thee spread ;

Where are the sheep and lambs of mine

That thou hast reared and fed ?

I placed thee in a land of light,

Where the Gospel round thee shone ;

Where is that heavenly-mindedness

I find in all my own ?

And last, I sent thee chastisement,

That thou might'st be my son ;

Where is the trusting faith that saith,

Father, thy will be done ? "



CHRIST AS OUR MODEL.

" For even hereunto were ye called : because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." 1 PETER II, 21.

MAN's senses are constituted with an adaptation to the external world ; and his intellectual constitution is adapted to intercourse with his fellow-man. The delicate bony structure of the ear, which conveys sounds from the tympanum to the sensorium, is nicely adjusted by the Maker

to appreciate and convey the tones and modulations of the human voice. Human gesture, likewise, and the expression of the countenance and the eye, are auxiliary to human language in conveying instruction. The nature of man, therefore, is adapted, both physically and intellectually, to receive knowledge by communications from one of his own species. If God designed that an angel should instruct the human family, one of two things would have to be done—either the human constitution would have to be elevated and adapted to intercourse with a being of a higher order in the scale of creation, or that being would have to let down his nature to human capacity, and thus adapt himself to intercourse with human natures. And, it would even be requisite that the teacher should not assume the highest condition of humanity in order that his instructions should accomplish the greatest general good; nor should his communications be made in the most cultivated and elevated style of language. If he would instruct the common mind in the best manner, he must use common language and common illustrations; and if God—blessed be his name—were himself to instruct human nature, *as it is*, the same means would be necessary.

Another step—man is so constituted that he learns by example better than precept. Theory without practice, or precept without example does not constitute a perfect system of instruction. The theory of surveying, however perfect it may be taught in college, never makes a practical surveyor. An artist may give a most perfect theory of his art to his apprentices or those whom he wishes to instruct in a knowledge of his business, but if he would have them become practical artists themselves, he must, with tools in hand, practice his own instructions before the eyes of the learner. In the language of the trades, he must “show how it’s done.” Such, then, is the nature of man, that in order to a perfect system of instruction, there must be both precept and practice.

Now, there can be but one perfect model of human

nature. And man could not be removed to some other planet, nor out of his present circumstances, to be instructed. If the Almighty, therefore, designed ever to give a perfect and final system of instruction to mankind, it could be done only by placing in this world a perfect human nature—a being who would not only give perfect precepts, but who would practice those precepts before the eyes of men. If such a being were placed among men, who, amid all the perplexities, difficulties, and trials which affect men in their present condition, would exhibit perfect action of body, heart and mind, in all his relations of life, and in all his duties to God and man—that would be a model character, practicing the precepts of the Divine law in man's present circumstances. The example of an angel, or of any being of a different order from man, would be of no benefit to the human family. Man must see his duties, as man, exemplified in his own nature. *Human nature could be perfected only by following a perfect model of human nature.* But, with the rule of duty in his hand, and a model character before him, man would have a system of instruction perfectly adapted to his *nature*; and adapted to *perfect* his nature. If God, therefore, designed to give man a final and perfect system of instruction, he would adopt the method thus adapted to the constitution which he has given his creatures. Now, JESUS CHRIST IS THAT MODEL CHARACTER. He assumed human nature—came to the earth, man's residence—expounded and illustrated the Law in human language; gave it its spiritual import, and applied it to the different circumstances and conditions of human life. He removed the false glosses which the ignorance and the prejudices of men had attached to it. He modified or rescinded those permissions or clauses which were accommodated to the darkness of former times, and the imperfections of the Jewish system, and then, by applications the most striking and definite, he showed the bearing of the rule of duty upon all varieties of human action.

And further: the law being thus defined and applied, in

order that the world might have a model character, he conformed himself to all its requirements. And in order that that model might be a guide in all the varied circumstances in which some of the family of man might be placed, Jesus placed himself in all those circumstances, and *acted* in them. Is man surrounded by a sinful and suffering world? So was Jesus. Does he desire to know how to act in such circumstances? Jesus ministered occasionally to the temporal wants of men, and labored continually to promote their spiritual good. Is man popular? So was Jesus; and he used his influence to purify his Father's house. Is man forsaken by his last friend? So was Jesus; and he upbraided and murmured not, but sought consolation in communion with the Father. Does man visit and dine with the learned, and the religious formalists of the age? So did Jesus; and in his conversation he maintained the claims of spiritual religion, and reproved man's hypocrisy and formality. Does man sit down in the cottage of the poor? So did Jesus; and he encouraged and comforted the inmates with spiritual instruction. Is man present when a group of friends are assembled on an occasion which warrants innocent enjoyment? So was Jesus; and he approved their social pleasures. Is man called to sympathize with those in affliction? So was Jesus; and *Jesus wept!* Thus by land and by sea, in all places and under all circumstances, wherever any of earth's children are called to act, Jesus—the model man—is seen living and moving before them; and his voice falls upon their ear with the mingled cadence of authority and encouragement—"FOLLOW ME!"—*Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation.*

THE SOUL TAKEN CAPTIVE.

"Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer." PROVERBS I, 28.

SOME years ago a gentleman stepped into an English railroad-car, in which there was but a single person; the train

was soon under way, when he discovered that his fellow-traveler stared upon him with fiery eyes, and became very uneasy, moving his limbs impatiently, peering anxiously out of the windows, staring at the wheels, and changing his seat frequently in manifest excitement. The train was an express, and rushing onward at utmost speed, nor destined to stop till the city was reached. Presently the gentleman found his wild fellow-traveler upon him with a long sharp knife, saying, in the manner of a maniac, "I am going to kill you!" A death-struggle began; the assailed man attempted to disarm the assailant, who seemed to possess superhuman strength. He could not escape; he shrieked for help, but his cries were drowned by wheels and steam, though hundreds were moving with him before and behind. The glittering blade moved hither and thither with frenzied force about the struggling man, who, gashed and bleeding, was dreading each blow as the fatal one. At length he wrested the knife from the maniac's hand, and threw it out of the window. He was now seized by his throat as by an enraged tiger; but, by a desperate effort, he threw his assailant; and, placing his knee upon his breast, held his hands, every moment, however, growing weaker from loss of the blood which poured from his open wounds as the maniac writhed in frantic efforts beneath him. O what a condition! The past and future come up in that moment as in panorama—the light of life seems to fade away and the body to dissolve in its supernatural struggles; but, as the train slackened its speed, hope revived; and, as he made his last effort for life, the door opened and he was saved.

This is but a faint emblem of the soul overmastered by some sinful habit, or haunted by some devilish association, inwrought in its very being, and standing out in bolder relief as the powers of life sink. The earth rolls on, the wheels of commerce rattle through the streets, friends smile before and behind, but no one sees the conflict, no one can give relief but God.—*Dr. E. Thomson.*

SAUL AT THE GATES OF DAMASCUS.

"The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind." ISAIAH XVII, 13.

IN one of the grandest regions of the Bernese Oberland, Switzerland, plunges that magnificent water-fall, the Staubbach. Rushing headlong from a precipice of nearly nine hundred feet, perpendicular hight, it threatens sweeping devastation to the cottages below. No human barriers, it would seem, could stand the tremendous onset of its waters. They appear suspended a moment in mid-heaven, like a bird of prey hovering over his victim, then swooping down to the work of destruction. Yet long before this threatening torrent strikes the ground, its prodigious fall diffuses it into softest mist, and in fertilizing dew it refreshes to new verdure the very fields it had menaced with desolation.

So was it, we have often thought, with the visit of Saul to Damascus. He started "brèathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lōrd." He raged like a panting tiger for their blood. He asked of the High-Priest, to be let loose among the Nazarenes. He would make sure work with these heretics. Their detestable superstition had been handled too tenderly. He would see if the children of Abraham could not be delivered from the pest. He would wield no petty, teasing persecution, but one that should completely and forever crush the spreading curse.

Yet how marvelously is God, meanwhile, preparing to make the wrath of man to praise him! No sooner does this storm of fury approach the city than as "the wind that bloweth where it listeth" dissolves the water-fall, so the Spirit turns this desolating torrent into fertilizing showers for the Church.

The language of our Lord to this startled persecutor is full of suggestion. "It is hard for thee to kick against

the pricks." "Thou art," that is, *already* harnessed to the chariot of my salvation! Already thou art, in all thy rage and frantic struggle, only toiling under my yoke. What a revelation to a maddened enemy! One might have expected Saul to be goaded by it to a perfect frenzy. But rage has suddenly died within him. The voice he heard was too clearly something more than human. He is in no mood for cursing now. He would rather weep for his sin—if they will but admit him—in the midst of the disciples of the Nazarene.

After the crucified, dying thief—after Saul at the gates of Damascus—how is it, why is it, that we have not faith to look *through* the hardness of men's hearts to the wonder-working Spirit behind?



TURNING OVER A MONUMENT.

"Envy slayeth the silly one." JOB V, 2.

IN Grecian story we are told of a man who killed himself through envy. His fellow-citizens had reared a statue to one of their number, who was a celebrated victor in the public games. A rival of the victor knew it, and his soul was sorely troubled by it. He went forth every night in order, if possible, to destroy that monument. At first he found no success; but tugging and toiling, he at last moved the statue from its pedestal, and it fell; and in its fall it crushed him. Thus suicidal is the element of envy in every human soul. It is a burning coal, "hissing hot from hell," destroying all peace, and destroying at last whoever keeps it in his bosom.



AND YET MORE.

"Having hope that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the Gospel in the regions beyond you." 2 COR. X, 15.

WHEN Xavier was preparing to go forth upon his mission through the East, his friend, Rodriguez, who shared

his apartment in the hospital at Rome, was awakened in the night by his earnest exclamations. He heard him tossing restlessly on his couch, and at times there came from the sleeping man the agitated appeal, "Yet more, O my God! yet more!"

It was not till many months afterward that he revealed the vision. He had seen in his slumber the wild and terrible future of his career spread out before him. There were barbarous regions, islands, and continents, and mighty empires which he was to win to his faith. Storms, indeed, swept around them, and hunger and thirst were every-where, and death in many a fearful form; yet he shrank not back. He was willing to dare the peril, if he could but win the prize. Nay, he yearned for still wider fields of labor, and with an absorbing passion that filled every faculty, and haunted him even in his slumber, he exclaimed over and over, "*Yet more, O my God! yet more!*" What an example of earnestness! We are *earnestly* to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; to pray *earnestly*, to wrestle earnestly, to do every thing we put our hand to with our might.



ROWLAND HILL.

"We trust in the living God." 1 TIMOTHY IV, 10.

ROWLAND HILL, whose name occupies considerable space in the religious history of the past century, was the son of Sir Rowland Hill, of Hawksworth, England. He was born in the year 1744, and was educated at Eton and Cambridge. At Eton, and when very young, he embraced the doctrines of Methodism, and subsequently, at Cambridge, he preached, by permission, in the prison, and in several private houses. He likewise officiated in the tabernacle and chapel of Rev. George Whitefield, London, which step, of course, immediately identified him with the Calvinistic Methodists. His family connections prevented him from formally uniting with them at the time. The same cause also operated, with

more serious force, against his obtaining ordination in the Church. At length, however, he succeeded in his wishes, and, with Whitefield, commenced his exercises in field-preaching. In 1783 he laid the foundation of Surrey Chapel, Blackfriars-road, London, where he spent about the half of each subsequent year, and the other half in provincial excursions through the kingdom.

Rowland Hill, though addicted to many eccentricities, and too fond, in his sermons, of puns and jokes, had many excellent qualities both of mind and heart, and did considerable good in his generation. When nearly ninety years of age, he preached with scarcely any diminished power or effect. A few years before his death he was in the practice of repeating the following stanza :

" And when I'm to die,
Receive me, I'll cry,
For Jesus has loved me, I can not tell why;
But this I can find,
We two are so joined,
That he'll not be in glory and leave me behind."

"The last time he occupied my pulpit," writes Rev. George Clayton to his biographer, "when he preached excellently, for an hour, in behalf of a charitable institution, he retired to the vestry after service, under feelings of great and manifest exhaustion. Here he remained till every individual, except the pew-openers, his servant, and myself, had left the place. At length he seemed, with some reluctance, to have summoned energy enough to take his departure, intimating that it was, in all probability, the last time he should preach in Walworth. His servant went before to open the carriage door; the pew-openers remained in the vestry. I offered my arm, which he declined, and then followed him as he passed down the aisle of the chapel. The lights were nearly extinguished; the silence was profound; nothing, indeed, was heard, but the slow, majestic tread of his own footsteps, when, in an under tone, he thus soliloquized :

' And when I'm to die,' etc.

"To my heart this was a scene of unequaled solemnity; nor can I ever recur to it without a revival of that hallowed, sacred, shuddering sympathy which it originally awakened.

"When Rowland Hill was dying, when he was apparently unconscious, a friend put his mouth close to his ear, and repeated slowly his favorite stanza, 'And when I'm to die,' etc. The light came back to his fading eye, a smile overspread his face, and his lips moved in the ineffectual attempt to articulate the stanza. And this was the last sign of sensibility which he gave."

All that we need, to live well and to die well, is to have Christ formed within us the hope of glory, and to be enabled to say, whenever called, "I am prepared to die."



OBSCURITIES OF OUR PRESENT WALK.

"What I do thou knowest not now, but shall know hereafter." JOHN XIII, 7.

REVELATION to us is not like the broad and clear sun that sheds down its rays on the spread-out landscape covered with smiling fields, and flocks, and hamlets; disclosing each tree, and hill, and house, and the winding course of each rivulet—it is, to use an illustration suggested by another, like the light-house that gleams on a dark and stormy coast to reveal the haven to the ocean-tossed mariner. "It shines afar over the stormy ocean, only *penetrating* a darkness which it never was intended to expel." The mariner can see that light clearly. It guides him. It cheers him when the tempest beats around him, and when the waves roll high. It shows him where the port is. It assures him that if he reaches that spot he is safe. It is all that he wants from that shore now, amid the darkness of the night, to guide him. True, it is not a sun; it does not dissipate all the darkness; "it is a mere star, showing nothing but itself—perhaps not even its own reflection on the water." But it is enough. There it stands despite the

storm and the darkness, to tell the mariner just what he wishes to know and no more. It has saved many a richly-freighted bark, and all that he needs is that it will save his own. It tells him that there is a haven there, though it leaves him all uninformed about every thing else. Beyond the distance where it throws its beams, all is midnight. On a thousand questions on which curiosity might be excited, it casts no light whatever. "The cities, the towns, the green fields, the thousand happy homes which spread along the shore to which it invites him, it does not reveal." On a calmer sea curiosity would be glad to know all about the land on which that light stands, and to anticipate the time when, safe from danger, the feet might range over those fields "beyond the swelling flood." And so, too, "all is dark in reference to that stormy expanse over which the mariner has sailed," and all around him, as well as on the land to which he goes; but shall he therefore reject the aid of that light because it discloses no more? Shall he refuse its assistance in guiding his vessel into port because it does not disclose to him all that there is in that land, or shed a flood of day on the heavens above him, and on all that stormy ocean on which he is embarked?

So it is in respect to the Gospel. Man, too, is on a stormy ocean—the ocean of life, and the night is very dark. The Gospel is a light "standing on the dark shore of eternity, just simply guiding us there." It reveals to us almost nothing of the land to which we go, but only the way to reach it. It does nothing to answer the thousand questions which we would ask about that world, but it tells how we may see it with our own eyes. It does not tell us all about the past—the vast ocean of eternity that rolled on countless ages before we had a beginning; about the government of God; about our own mysterious being; but it would guide us to God's "holy hill and tabernacle," where in his "light we may see light," and where what is now obscure may become as clear as noonday.—A.

Barnes.

THE IMPERFECT COPY.

"I have set the Lord always before me." PSALM XVI, 8.

"ALWAYS busy at your drawing, Edwin?" said his elder brother Henry, as he entered the school-room one morning.

Edwin looked up for a moment with a smile, and then went on tracing with evident pleasure the outline of a face. His brother came behind him, and looked over his shoulder. Edwin listened for his remarks, though without ceasing to draw.

"You are taking pains, I see," said Henry at last, in a kindly tone; "but I am afraid that you have to use your india rubber here and here; these lines, you may perceive, are not in good drawing."

"I don't see much wrong in them," replied Edwin, suspending his pencil, with something of vexation in his tone, for he had expected nothing but praise.

"If you compare them with your study, you will perceive that all this outline is incorrect."

"Where is the study?" continued Henry, looking in vain for it on the table.

"O, it's somewhere up stairs," said Edwin. "I remember very well what it is like, and can go on without looking at it every minute."

"Would you oblige me by bringing it?" said his brother, who perceived that as long as Edwin merely drew from memory, he would not see the faults in his sketch.

Edwin went up stairs rather unwillingly, and soon brought down a beautiful study; a face most perfect in form and expression.

Henry silently put the two pictures together. Edwin gazed with bitter disappointment on his own copy, which but a few moments before he had thought so good. Not a feature was really like; the whole looked crooked and cramped; even his partial eye could not but see a thousand faults in his sketch.

"I shall never get it right!" Edwin exclaimed, in a burst of vexation; and snatching up the unfortunate drawing, he would have torn it asunder, had he not been prevented by his brother.

"My dear Edwin, you have doubly erred; first, in being too easily satisfied, and then in being too easily discouraged."

"I shall never make it like that beautiful face!" cried the disheartened boy.

"You need patience, you need help, you need, above all, often to look at your copy. A perfect resemblance you never may have, but you may succeed in getting one which will do credit both to you and your master."

Edwin took up the pencil which he had flung down, and carefully and attentively studied the picture. He found very much in his copy to alter, very much to rub out; but at last he completed a very fair sketch, which he presented with a little hesitation to his brother.

"I shall have this framed and hung up in my room," said Henry.

"O, it is not worth that!" exclaimed Edwin, coloring with pleasure and surprise.

"Not in itself, perhaps," replied Henry; "but it will serve often to remind us both of an important truth, which was suggested to me when I saw you laboring at your copy."

Edwin looked in surprise at his brother, who thus proceeded to explain his words:

"We, dear Edwin, as Christians, have all one work set before us: to copy into our lives the example set us by a Heavenly Master. It is in the Bible that we behold the features of a character perfect and pure. But how many of us choose rather to imagine for ourselves what a Christian should be like! We aim low; we are content with little progress; we perhaps please ourselves with the thought of our own wisdom and goodness, while every one but ourselves can see that our copy is wretched and worthless."

"What are we to do?" said Edwin.

"We must closely examine the study set us in the Bible; we must compare our lives with God's law, and we shall then soon find enough of weakness and sin to make us humble ourselves before God. When we read of the meekness and gentleness of Christ, we shall be ashamed of our own passion and pride; when we find how holy was our great Example, we shall be grieved to think how unlike to Him we are."

"We can never make a good copy," sighed Edwin, "we may just give up the attempt at once!"

"You judge as you did when you wished to tear up your picture in despair, as soon as you saw how imperfect it was. No, no, my dear boy, I say to you now as I said to you then, you need *patience*, you need *help*—help from the good Spirit of God; and, above all, you need to look often at your study, to keep the character and work of your Lord ever before your eyes."

"But if I do my best I shall still fall so short!"

"I know it," said Henry, gravely; "but this feeling should not prevent your aiming at perfection. God will complete his work in the hearts of his servants, not on earth, but in heaven. There the copy, feebly commenced below, shall be made a likeness indeed! For what says the Word of God? *'We know that when He shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is!'*"



SHARP-SHOOTING.

"And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot." 2 KINGS IX, 24.

BEFORE the science of war had reached its present development, it was estimated that for every man killed in battle, his weight in lead had been shot toward him by the enemy. Even with all the appliances of modern warfare, it has been estimated that at the bloody battle of Pittsburg Landing, Tennessee, 6,000 shots were fired for every man that

was killed. Something not unlike this is noticed in the warfare against sin by the preached Gospel. There is many a person upon whom nearly or quite his weight in sermons has been expended, and the man of sin in him is not yet slain, it may be not even wounded.

This lack of execution on the battle-field and in the pulpit, is owing to not taking aim. The soldier points his weapon *toward* the enemy, and fires, but whether he shall hit one man or another, or none at all, he too often leaves to chance. The majority of deaths on the battle-field are accidental deaths. So the preacher prepares his sermon; a good sermon it may be, plain, pointed, pungent, full of the very pith and marrow of the Gospel, and delivers it to his congregation, with small regard to any particular individual. If any one be affected by it, more often than otherwise it is because the arrow shot at a venture is guided by the Holy Spirit through a joint in some harness.

There is a more excellent way of warfare than that which expends 6,000 shots to kill one man. A single sharp-shooter is worth threescore soldiers who simply bring their guns to a level and shoot without aim. In a recent engagement one rifleman completely silenced a piece of artillery, picking off every man who attempted to load the gun. The soldier whose every shot kills a man is the one who renders the most decisive assistance toward winning the day. With reasonable allowance for the difference between carnal warfare and spiritual, may not the same principle be profitably carried into the pulpit occasionally if not continually?

Taking a hint from the sharp-shooter, the writer recently prepared a sermon with express reference to a single individual in his congregation; carefully avoiding, of course, any allusion, however remote, which might direct the attention of others to her, or even lead her to suppose that the sermon was designed for her more than for others, but having specific reference to her alone, with hope and prayer that God would bless it to her conversion. When the

sermon was preached, the whole mind and soul of the preacher were intensely directed toward her. It speedily became evident, from her downcast look and moistening eyes, that the aim was a sure one, and during the whole discourse her most absorbed attention was given to the word of truth. Not only so, but an unusual solemnity rested upon the whole congregation, and the sermon proved more effective than any other that had been preached for many Sabbaths. The good impression made upon the individual was deepened by pastoral labor, and the result was a hopeful conversion.

Brethren in the ministry, take aim. If each sermon were the means of saving a soul, with how much hope and courage should we labor! We can not be sure of such a result, but if, when we discharge a sermon at our congregations, we take aim, we may have good hope to hit, and make wounds which only the Spirit of God can heal.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER OF THE POTOMAC.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." HEBREWS XIII, 5.

In the month of May, 1862, a poor fellow lay dying in one of the wards of the Fairfax Seminary (Va.) hospital. The assistant surgeon meeting me said: "I think, chaplain, he is inclined to religious conversation, but I have no time to say a word to him."

I went to his sick-bed. A pale smooth face, with light hair and blue eyes, looked up at me silently.

"Would you see him alone?" asked the surgeon.

"Yes," and I sat down near the dying man.

"I am a stranger, a minister; the doctor told me you were very sick and had no friends, and I came to see you."

"Thank you, I feel very bad."

"Where are you from?"

"Wisconsin."

"You were not born there?"

"No, in Norway."

"Any family in Wisconsin?"

"None, all in Norway—father, sister, brothers; my mother die three years—after I came this country."

"Will you get well, think?"

"I don' know—very weak—weaker every day."

"You may not get well."

"No, I may not."

"How do you feel about dying? Are you afraid to die?"

"No, sir, I am willing to die."

"Do you love the Savior? Do you trust in him?"

"I have no other trust."

"How have you lived of late? Did you find it hard to be good in the army?"

"Well, I try to behave well. I have nice fader and mudder. They tell me much good I never forget. I did not swear any, nor use bad word, nor drink. I try to pray sometime."

"I am glad for you. We are great sinners, and need to be on the watch all the time."

"Yes, yes, with Him the best we do ourself is bad."

"His Spirit helpeth our infirmities. By His grace we are saved."

Thus, with sacred consolations, I sought to soothe the unfriended soldier-boy, and point him to the great Helper above. I could not help thinking what a blessed thing it would have been could his father or sister have been with him in his last moments; but they were not.

"Many things," said he, "we forget when all is well and strong. But now it comes to me all."

"We shall never meet again here. In another world, I hope to see you, where the inhabitants say no more, 'I am sick.'"

"I hope so," said he, his voice trembling and his eyes running over; "I hope so."

"Shall I pray with you?"

"O yes, do, please!"

I sang the hymn,

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly;"

repeating the second verse,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee," etc.;

then prayed and parted. His name was Jacob Nelson. His last words—and I shall never forget them, nor the tender glance of his eye, as he pressed my hand, saying slowly—"O—sir—I—am—much—oblige—I—am—much oblige—to—you."

Farewell, young soldier of the Potomac, I shall meet you some day in a land where hospital sorrows are unknown! Surely there must be truth in the system which will enable one like you to die thus triumphant, away from friends, and family, and kindred, and home. And there is for me a comfort, known only to the pious, in thus being able to draw near to God, and, with an expiring fellow-sinner, aid him in preparing to pass the prison chamber of the Deity.—*L. C. Matlack.*



THE MAN AT THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

"Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." ISAIAH XLVIII, 10.

By nature man is selfish and unsympathizing. His first impulse is to care for self alone, and it is not till his mind and heart have been influenced by interest or grace that he yields his personal claims. In order to sympathize fully with another you must have had similar experiences yourself. You might as well expect a picture of a gorgeous Summer sunset from a blind man, or Beethoven's symphonies from a mute, as true sympathy in affliction from one who never knew a grief.

Suffering Christianizes us. Often, before this rich expe-

rience is vouchsafed unto us, Christ is a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness; the Bible a mere collection of old tales; heaven and hell words of very doubtful significance; while this great present world fills our vision and receives all our attention.

How changed is all this by a simple touch of God's finger! Christ then becomes the chiefest among ten thousand, clothed with every beauty and grace; the Word of God is made the lamp to our feet; the future life alone is real, and the present a vapor, a dream, a tale that is told.

A few years ago two friends were visiting Niagara Falls. While there, one went out on that frail narrow bridge that connects Goat Island with the tower rock, where the torrent precipitates itself into the fearful abyss at your feet. There he stood on the edge of life, gazing spell-bound into the jaws of death ready to receive him. Deafened by the incessant roar, half-blinded by the spray, fragments of rainbows flashing out of the mist like spirit hands beckoning him to leap into the flood, his brain began to whirl, sense grew dim, and his body slowly waved to and fro over the yawning gulf.

His friend, from the shore, saw his peril. He shouted to him in vain; his voice was swallowed up in the din and rush of that tremendous cataract. He sprang upon the bridge, and reaching the end of the platform, seized his friend by the arm, and the dazed man was saved.

I see a human soul standing unconsciously on the brink of ruin. Around him are the rushing torrents of life. He has still a foothold on the rock of early religious teaching, or perhaps a pious mother's prayers, but his spiritual senses are deadened by the ceaseless roar of the world. He is warned of his danger; friends entreat him, God calls to him; but the still small voice is not heard in the tumult, when suddenly, for the soul's safety, God comes and touches him—it may be, in his tenderest point—but who shall say that it is other than in love?

Suffering sanctifies us. It is that spiritual culture by

which Christ makes a branch, already fruitful, bring forth more fruit; a process whereby we are made holy to the Lord. And, O, poor crushed child of affliction, while in the Gethsemane of sorrow you ask, "Why this cup?" and no answer comes, remember that what you know not now you shall know hereafter. You will then find, as you look back on your sad pilgrimage, that those places which seemed like the valleys of the shadow of death, in the glorious light of retrospect are the very mountain-tops of God's providence, where you were nearer heaven than at any other period of your journey; yea, where the shadows of the Almighty fell the darkest on you, according to the Psalmist you were dwelling in the secret places of the Most High.

Suffering shall glorify us. "And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."



FAULT HUNTERS.

"Charity beareth all things." 1 CORINTHIANS XIII, 7.

It is a very sad thing to have an eye to see faults. How disagreeable it is to think of a man that is brought up to clean out a dissecting hospital, and that never sees any thing except fragments of death and morbidity! What a training that must be which a man goes through who lives merely to remove the feculent substances of life! And yet I would rather be such a man than one whose eye, whose ear, whose every faculty, was a trap set to catch the imper-

fections of men; whose soul, however dormant, always waked up when evil was spoken of; who was sensitive to faults more than to virtues. But this sense of the imperfections of others exists in varying degrees in every body. I am sorry to say that there is an almost infernal pleasure which every body takes in dwelling upon others' faults. It is much resisted and controlled in many, and in some it is almost overcome; but I am afraid that there are times and moods in which all of us have a sense of the imperfections of men that stimulates us, and gratifies us. I am afraid that to a certain extent all of us are pleased by the recognition of each other's failings. There are ill-natured proverbs about this, but I am afraid there are foundations for them.

Now, how much better would it be if we trained ourselves to look upon one another as the school-mistress looks upon her pupils! She says, "That one has been here a year, that one six months, and that one has only just come. Of course, each differs from the other in attainment; but they are all imperfect, and all of them will improve." One is very ignorant, the second is also ignorant, though less so, and the third is ignorant, though still less so; but their ignorance is not repulsive to her. She feels, "They are here to learn, and I am bringing them toward knowledge." Would it not be well for us to look upon our children, and companions, and friends, and partners, and neighbors, projecting them into the light of this thought: "O, how this person will look when I see him in the glory of the Father's kingdom!" If we look upon them as belonging wholly to this world, we shall see nothing in them that is attractive or beautiful; but if we look upon them as undergoing here a process of trituration, a process of hammering, a process of preparation by fire, a process of education, we shall make them appear glorious.

You have to bear with me, and I have to bear with you. There are no two persons that can walk together in this world without having to bear much from each other, and to

bear long with each other, so full are we of imperfections. But the day is coming when you shall be so glorious in every part and element of your being that no one shall come near you without feeling saluted by your excellence. And if you think of these things beforehand, it will help you to bear and forbear with those who are imperfect around about you.

USE OF THE MEANS.

“Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.” GALATIANS VI, 9.

WHEN a man would secure any natural blessing he uses means. If he would reap, he must sow—that is, he must scatter in order to gather. When he would obtain a competent share of the blessings of this world, he is diligent in his calling. When he would reach a higher knowledge, he begins by mastering the elements. If he would get love, he must begin by giving love. You get a child to love you, you must do something that will make him believe you have love within you. Your hand must touch his head, his cheek, or your lips his lips, and the tongue must discourse sweetness. There are, in like manner, means of obtaining blessings in the kingdom of grace; here, too, he who would reap must sow; he who would rise to sight must begin by exercising faith. The means by which we obtain the common blessings are, in both kingdoms, very simple and very obvious; the most careless may discover them, a child may understand them. In the spiritual kingdom, he who would obtain the blessings must ask them from Him who dispenses them. He who would acquire Divine knowledge must read the lesson-book which the great Prophet of the Church has written, and hear those who have been appointed to expound it. There are symbols of entrance into Christ, and symbols of growth in the Divine life, which all will be disposed practically to value who aspire after admission into the kingdom or advancement in it. Those who would

obtain the spiritual grace will cherish trust and love toward Him who is the fountain of grace.

"If a flower
Were thrown you out of heaven at intervals,
You'd soon attain to a trick of looking up."

But there are better gifts thrown out from heaven than flowers; and those who wish and wait for them acquire an upward, a heavenward look.

In both, the means are usually crowned with success. He who continues in the use of them, sooner or later, secures the blessing. But in neither are they certainly successful. He who has sown may not reap on the first harvest, nor is he sure of reaping every harvest. The diligent man may be disappointed in some of the plans which he has devised with greatest wisdom, and pursued with greatest energy. In like manner he who reads and prays may not get the spiritual blessing the moment he asks, nor always when he asks. In both kingdoms, God has given sufficient inducement to the use of means; but in both he has kept the issue in his own hands, that all men, and all Christians in particular, may feel their dependence on him.—*Dr. M' Cosh.*

HOW SHALL A MINISTER HAVE POWER?

"A man that hath friends must show himself friendly." PROV. XVIII, 24.

LET us, as preachers, secure a personal attachment from our people. They must love us if we expect our plans to do them good. If we consult history we shall find that nearly all the great leaders of the world have been remarkable for almost a fascinating power over the hearts of those that came near them. The great heresiarchs of the Church in all ages have begun here. Paul alludes to it in his third chapter of Galatians, first verse: "*O foolish Galatians, who hath BEWITCHED you that ye should not obey the truth?*" It was something that seemed like witchcraft; and we are told by Jerome that most of the leaders in heresy had great per-

sonal attractions. We have similar testimony concerning the warriors and political leaders of antiquity. Alexander was beloved by his friends; Cæsar was adored by his soldiers; Cicero, Cato, and even Antony, were men greatly beloved; Gustavus, Cromwell, Pitt, Bonaparte, the same. Of the last named it is said, that at one time certain of his regiments refused to fight. They were ordered in line before him, every man expecting severe punishment. Napoleon paused for some time till the silence was complete. He then said: "Soldiers! I have been disappointed in you once—shall I ever be again?" Nothing else; no more. There was a full swell of voices, which grew to a thunder of huzzas; those regiments afterward were the truest and bravest of all the legions of the great conqueror.

Our blessed Savior, supreme in power and divine majesty, did not disdain this golden key as unlocking the human heart. We have a remarkable proof of this in John xx, 17: "*Jesus saith unto her, [i. e., Mary,] Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father.*" That this woman should have wished to embrace him, whom she must have regarded as almost a ghost, is a proof how great her affection. The spirit of the passage seems to be: "Ah, Mary, the hour of human friendship and fondness is at an end. I belong to the celestial family now; no more time must be spent in fond embraces; you may still love me, but love me as your risen Lord. *For I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*" Paul, it is clear, won the affections of all with whom he came in contact; and it gave him immense power in preaching the Gospel. Like Moses, we may say his face shone with benignity and love. The hardy centurion, the stern judge, the slave-owner, and the tyrant always favored him. No wonder he said to Timothy, "*Let no man despise thy youth!*" He had a right to put his admonition into this reflected form. He had proved the power of the passions over the action. How much significance is there in that simple declaration: "*And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go*

unto his friends and refresh himself." If Paul gave this fact to Luke, in the conduct of this centurion he modestly related his own.

The preacher of the obscurest parish is the hero of a little world; and in that circumscribed sphere there is room for the greatest skill, and the exercise of the most gigantic virtues. It is true, there is a sense in which the world will hate the faithful preacher of righteousness. But it is a curious kind of hatred. If it has an underground of veneration, it often breaks down at the touch of a finger. It is a hatred which, without a miracle, is most miraculously subdued.

This love is won, not by worldly art, or sacrificing high principle, but by a steady, manly course of discharging duty; by saying the right thing at the right time; by provoking no one, and cringing to no one, but moving, as the sun does, over the bogs and over the gardens, over the hills and over the vales, in the same steady, refulgent course, and never clouded but by mists, which gather darkness only to be dissipated again.—*Leonard Withington, D. D.*



THE EDDYSTONE ROCKS.

"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1 JOHN v, 4.

IN the English Channel are three tiers of rocks known as the Eddystone Rocks, which from time immemorial have been a terror to sailors. On the principal one of these rocks various attempts have been made to erect a lighthouse, as a guide to the mariner. By a combination of undercurrents, all such attempts had proved unsuccessful. In 1696 Henry Winstanly succeeded in completing a structure, by ingrafting one stone into another, which he supposed immovable. Having completed the whole, he remained within the solid work, and said he would like to stay there during the most stormy night ever known. Old

Ocean heard that challenge. Wave summoned wave to the trial. The night came on, dark and furious. Surge after surge beat against the boastful work, and overwhelmed its summit. The night passed away, and a calm, peaceful morning follows; but the light-house and its builder are no where seen. The waves murmur to each other as if in triumph and mockery over the ruin. Still, said England's mechanics, It can be done. In 1709 another was built; but this too was soon swept away. Still said John Smeaton, *It can be done!* In 1759 he completed another structure on a different plan, which has now stood almost a century, looking down in proud defiance on Ocean's stormiest hour, and guiding thousands into port. So in planting the light-house of the Gospel to guide our wrecked humanity over life's troublesome sea, if the first or second effort is not successful, faith, looking forward to the promises, and backward to Omnipotence, cries, *It can be done!*

A GUILTY CONSCIENCE.

"A wounded spirit who can bear?" PROVERBS XVIII, 14.

THE guilty soul can not keep its own secret. It is false to itself, or rather it feels an irresistible impulse to be true to itself. It labors under its guilty possession and knows not what to do with it. The human heart was not made for the residence of such an inhabitant. It finds itself preyed upon by a torment which it does not acknowledge to God or man. A vulture is devouring it, and it can ask no sympathy or assistance, either from heaven or earth. The secret which the murderer possesses soon comes to possess him; and, like the evil spirit of which we read, it overcomes him, and leads him whithersoever it will. He feels it beating at his heart, rising to his throat, and demanding disclosure. He thinks the whole world sees it in his face, reads it in his eyes, and almost hears its workings in the very silence of his thoughts. It has become his master.

It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him, and the net of circumstances to entangle him, the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It *must* be confessed; it *will* be confessed; there is no refuge from confession, but suicide; and suicide is confession.—*Daniel Webster.*

OUR BRIEF YEARS.

"We spend our years as a tale that is told." PSALM xc, 9.

As a tale that is told! Years, with all their vast variety of incident, are remembered vaguely—they are thin and dreamy! The *present* glows and even burns with intensity. But it is quenched when a few days are past! Days come in with form, and sound, and motion like the coming in of crested waves. Like them, they break upon the shore of the present; they cover it with a million evanescent gems; they dissolve and flow out in undertow, and are lost again in the black depths—while new days, like new waves, foam, sparkle, and break, as did they!

One by one come to us days and years. Coming, they have individuality! But receding from us they lose all separateness, and the past is one indistinguishable whole.

Who can analyze and separate the years of his childhood? From birth till one is four or five, the unripe brain receives few impressions that last. It is all blank. As in a printed book, at either end, are bound up many blank leaves without print or writing on them, so is human life, at either end, begun and ended with blank years, preserving no record—leaving no mark!

But, then come the youthful days—full of romp, of hunger, of growth, of childish exhilaration! How do they seem to you now? Are they separable? Can you thread them, and paint them by memory? Only one or two things peculiarly significant remain. The days are huddled to-

gether. The very years are heaped in mass ; and you think back upon twenty years as if they were but a hand-breadth !

It is as with a landscape to a traveler. Having journeyed all day, at evening reaching some high hill, he sits down to trace his path. The grass at his feet is plain enough, and the ants that run express up and down every stalk have brisk distinctness. The near bushes and the trees are so plain that the boughs and separate leaves stand out in their individual forms. But, as the view recedes, gradually he loses all these ; and a little farther off, leaves lie upon leaves, grass is matted upon grass, and is no longer form, but only color. Yet farther, and trees begin to fade ; tree stands up upon tree, and at length whole forests are to the eye but faint clouds, with not one distinct line, and hills are rubbed out, and all the inequalities of the way, which the complaining foot felt in traveling, the eye no longer discerns, and only here and there a single peak or mountain remains clear and individual against the all-bounding sky !

Thus is it in life. Our nearer hours report themselves ; a little farther, and days only, not hours, are discerned ; then days lapse, and weeks or months are like long aerial distances, in one line, whose continuity is measured by no prominent object. At length, years only can be seen, and not even these finally. For, as sailors leaving the harbor carry with them for long time the sight of shore, but sailing still, lose first the low water-lines, but cling by the eye to the higher masses, which in time, in the ever sailing, fade and sink, leaving nothing but some high lifted far up like Teneriffe, which, after the night is passed, is all gone, hidden by the bend of the earth's surface ; so, even high-topped years at length are shut down from our memory by the bend of the vast cycles of Time.

How wonderfully true is it that we spend our lives as a tale that is told !

Come, go back with me.

Who were the members of your father's family ? Be

sides your brothers and sisters, who dwelt there? Who visited? Who came and went? Who were the neighbors? These things were vivid realities to you when a child. What are they now? Mere marks. As a landscape artist plants in the foreground figures with limbs and features clear, but in the far-off distance, when he would paint a figure, taking his brush and spots down a mere dash—a formless color-mark; so to us are the living things of the neighborhood. Some, to be sure, stand up and remain! But a million are forgotten where one remains.

Who were the girls? Who the boys? *Then*, when the uproarious school broke forth in tumult at dismissal, if I had asked you, you could have given every name. *Now*, call them up! Who sat by you on the right? who on the left? Who were in the first class? who in the second? These were important things then. Who was whipped? and who was never once struck? These, to *you*, were then more important than the roar of European revolution, the burning of Moscow, the battle of Waterloo; but what do you remember of them? Some memories are more tenacious than others. A few will reproduce much; more, some; most, but little if any!

How much can you recall from the Church? Who went with you? Who sat about you? Who were the old men? Who were in their prime? And who, like yourself, were young? And if these living and throbbing realities are faded out, it will be useless for me to ask you after the sermons. They were gone before they were finished. They fell upon your dissolving ear as flakes of snow upon water, and were gone in the very act of touching.

How much do you recall from the green graveyard? What memories come thence, from that populous city without a magistrate, without a law, where all who quarreled on earth are now peaceable dust keeping excellent neighborhood!

And thus I might go on, tracing, step by step, your entrance upon life—your early endeavors—your first hopes of manhood.

But let us change the method, and try the truth of this description in another way.

Call up the unwritten dreams and reveries of the past! They have filled years in all. You have woven fabrics of every pattern in the loom of fancy. You have reared up castles, peopled them with heroes; you have lost and found treasures; traveled and explored, fought and conquered, loved and won, all in airy fantasies; and thus worn out the watchful night, or wiled pain from consciousness in the weary sickness. Is *that* part of your life gone? All gone!

Birds gathered for flight in Autumn, rising high above snare or shot, and flying toward equatorial Summer, often chance in their course to cast a feather from the wing which carries them through the air—brilliant in color, and curved like a bow—which, wavering and swaying, falls into some thicket, while they flock on. And when, the seasons changing, they are recalled, and fly now northward over the same ranges, they reach the spot where dropped the spent feather, can they see it or find it any more? It is lost and hidden forever! And so our youthful fancies, which carried us far above human life and reality, are fallen, and like the downiest feather from the wing, are lost and forgotten! If a tale that is *told* fades, how much rather those untold tracteries of thought and subtlest evolutions of inarticulate fancy!

Where are the admirations which set the mind all a-sparkle? Where is the record of the wonders, the surprises, the ten thousand excitements which broke the level of life, and brought interjections to the lips? That a dull routine should be forgotten, is not strange. But where are the salient experiences of life, the events which beat upon the attention like a drum, or roused up your passions like a trumpet?

Only a few of all the myriads remain! As one who goes forth from a populous town, often looking back, sees it shrinking and growing smaller, houses fading, and the complexity of streets and buildings growing to a mere spot, and at length, only beholds here and there a long spire

against the sky, or single tower, all the rest confused and hidden; so, in the past, but one or two high-reaching experiences remain, while all the diverse and populous experiences besides are covered down and forgotten!

Your years of the past have been built of the same materials as go now to build your days. What rising and falling emotions, what flow of endless thought, what perpetual succession of events which arrest the attention and occupy the feelings, what endeavors, what successes, what failures, each with its train of joy or pain, and each so important as to seem to leave indelible marks upon the memory! Yet, though there have been ten millions of these, and though they were of strength sufficient to hold you in their thrall, and excite you with pleasure, or agitate you with alarm, or afflict you with grief, sweeping the soul as wind sweeps the sea, and raising as many tumultuous feelings as the sea hath waves; yet, now the smooth memory has shed them all! The trees will sooner remember all the successive leaves whose bosoms prepared the food for the growth of the wood, than you will recall the innumerable experiences of the past which have formed and fashioned you to the shape which you wear! The burdens which you could not carry for their weight are forgotten, the sorrows that pierced you to the heart have left scarcely their name; the troubles that blocked your way, the dangers that shook your courage, and all those things which in their time wrung from you cries and prayers for relief—you have not alone surmounted and outlived, but mostly forgotten.

Love, alone, stands with an undiminished memory! What we have once really loved we never forget! The friendship of youth, the warm and generous confidences of true affection, the tender worship of a true heart, are immutable! All other feelings write their memories upon glass with crayons—Love writes upon crystal with a diamond. For, of all the heart's powers, this alone is sovereign. And, being sovereign, God has crowned it with immortality, and given to Memory charge to keep unwasted

all its experiences! And Memory, that is tenacious of nothing else, lets nothing slip of the experiences of true loving.—*H. W. Beecher.*

DEATH BY CRUCIFIXION.

“And they crucified him.” MATTHEW XXVII, 35.

IN various countries crucifixion has been a mode of inflicting capital punishment upon transgressors. Among the Jews it was sometimes spoken of as hanging. It was a cruel and disgraceful death to die, as Cicero says in his oration against Verres. “The worst possible punishment,” Ulpian calls it; and other ancient writers speak of it in the same terms. It was in use among Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans, with peculiar refinements of torture, according to the taste of the people, or the degree of guilt for which the victim suffered. Herodotus says that Darius crucified three hundred persons after the siege of Babylon. Alexander nailed two thousand captives to as many crosses by the seaside, after the capture of Tyre. The Romans scourged the criminal before they crucified him. Thus they treated our Master.

The Hebrews derived the punishment from the Romans. The upright beam was let into the ground, and the criminal being raised up was fastened to the transverse piece by nails driven through his hands; sometimes through his feet also; and often the feet were crossed, and one nail driven through both. The feet were sometimes bound to the cross by cords. A small tablet declaring the crime was placed on the top of the cross. The victim died under the most frightful sufferings, so great that even amid the raging passions of war, pity was sometimes excited. The wounds were not in themselves fatal. A raging fever soon sets in, and the victim complains of intense headache, thirst, and pain. When mortification ensues, as is sometimes the case, the sufferer rapidly sinks. He is no longer sensible of pain, but his

anxiety and sense of prostration are excessive, hiccough supervenes, his skin is moistened with a cold, clammy sweat, and death ensues. The duration of life under these agonies, varied with the constitution of the sufferer and the state of the weather. Death was hastened by the heat of the sun and the exposure to the cold night air, but it did not ordinarily come to end the wretchedness of the victim, till he had hung for thirty-six or forty-eight hours; weary hours! Eusebius says that many of the martyrs in Egypt, who were crucified with their heads downward, perished by hunger. This is probably a mistake, as food would not have contributed to the support of life had the victim desired to eat, but the statement proves that the martyrs must have hung for some days in anguish before they expired. Richter states that some survive on the cross, for three, four, and even for nine days.

Our blessed Lord is believed to have died in about six hours from the time of being nailed to the cross. The historians speak of him as if he yielded up his breath when his work was done. But a dreadful death it was to die. And for us.

“Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree.”



TWO MORAL CLASSES AMONG MANKIND.

“He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.” PROVERBS x, 17.

Go in a private, friendly way to each of a score of your neighbors, and suggest to him or her some fault of character or some specific act which you regard as a moral wrong. Some of them, it may be hoped and expected, will *thank you* for your fidelity to their best interests. They will say, “I know my great liability to do things which I deplore and condemn. It is one of my first objects to avoid such

faults, to set right all the wrong I may have done as fast as it comes to my distinct knowledge, and to guard against such failures ever after. For success in this labor I pray every day, I might say every hour, of my life; and I account that man my best friend who lends me a helping hand."

Go again and meet some of a very different class. Your kind suggestion about their fault of character, or fault in conduct, they meet by indignantly demanding, "Who told you so?" "Who has been talking against me?" "I knew I had some enemies, but I did not know it had come to this!" "When will my neighbors be content to let me alone?" etc.

You will readily see that this is a new class, entirely distinct from the former. The latter justify and the former condemn their own sins. The latter feel the same sort of interest in defending a fault of character as in defending themselves; indeed, the idea of this distinction between their faults and themselves has not perhaps occurred to them. Certainly, they have not deliberately set their faces *against* all known or knowable faults in themselves.

But there are those who no longer make common cause with their own sins and faults of character. They have declared a war of extermination against both; and they will hail you as a real friend if you will take sides with them in this contest and give them any aid in your power against their declared enemies.

Do not these facts indicate the widest sort of difference in moral character between the former class and the latter? Is it not to be supposed that the Spirit of God marks this difference, and finds the one state of mind congenial and the other repugnant to his mission as a reprover of sin and a sanctifier of the heart and the life? And is it not more than probable that one of these classes is ripening for one sort of future life, and the other for a very different one?

Yet one more question: Does it not seem as if each man might know, with very decisive certainty, to which of these two classes he belongs?

THE ISOLATED ISLAND ROCK.

"My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." JOB VII, 6.

EXISTENCE seems to me, said an eloquent minister, now gone, like some isolated rock on a desolate shore. Many years, like tidal seas, have rolled over that shore, bearing on their bosom much, and carrying more away. My soul is filled with the distant murmurings of the last wave of one period ebbing out of sight to return no more, and the roar of the first wave of a new year laden with the unknown, but which, as yet, has not broken on the beach, nor yet appeared in sight. I know that some of the coming billows will bear me off into the immeasurable abyss of being, whither the many generations of past times are gone. I wait in suspense, and I feel a solemn sadness at the doleful echo of receding and approaching years.

THE PROFLIGATE SON.

"Come now, and let us reason together." ISAIAH I, 18.

SUPPOSE the case of a profligate and undutiful son. He has often wounded the heart, and set at naught the authority of the tenderest of fathers. He advances in filial depravity, till he determines to break away from all domestic inspection and restraint. The day appointed for the carrying out of his purpose arrives. As the first gray beams of morning steal into his chamber, he rises and prepares for his journey. All within are asleep besides. His father is unconscious of his plans. With clandestine step, and a thousand mingled emotions, he bids adieu to his birthplace and his home. In a few hours he finds himself on board the vessel which is to bear him to a foreign land. Month after month, through storms and sunshine, he pursues his way. He reaches his destination, and exults in the thought, that now, without restriction, he can revel in all the pleasures his new home can afford. The thought of his lost son fills the father with

distress. It disturbs him in his dreams at night. It scares him in the mornings. It spreads a sadness over him through the day. At length he is informed of the far-distant residence of his son, and of his wicked ways. He determines to restore him to a sense of filial obligation, and to his home. And what is the plan? He writes a letter—all that is moving in parental love is thrown into that letter. Now, on what will its success depend? On its contents? On its being delivered? On its being read? All this is required; but something more is indispensable, to bring out its full force upon his wicked heart. He must reflect upon it, as the expression of a tender father, whose heart, which he had well-nigh broken, still glows with warmest love for him. Young men, in this picture behold yourselves. You are prodigals. You have violated the love, and forsaken the home of the INFINITE FATHER. Here is a letter which he has addressed to you. In it he says, "Come now, and let us reason together." O, what omnipotent reasonings of paternal love are here! Have you ever devoted one day to a concentrated reflection upon the contents of this document, in its relation to you? If not, you have never tried the *only* way to repentance. Go and think thus, and as you muse *the fire will burn*. God's complaint of the world is, its religious thoughtlessness. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not CONSIDER."—*Rev. D. Thomas, England.*

THE IMPORTANCE OF MAN.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" PSALM VIII, 3, 4.

MAN, in his immortal nature, is a being who has all the importance which has ever been attributed to him. He has an intrinsic worth that renders proper all the care that God has shown for him; all the interest manifested for him in

the eternal councils of heaven ; all the value implied in the incarnation and atonement of the Redeemer for his salvation. Great as has been the sacrifice made for him on the cross ; inconceivable as were the sufferings of the Son of God in his behalf, his salvation is worth all which it has cost, and will be an adequate and ample return to the Redeemer for all his pangs, and toils, and blood ; for “he shall see of the fruit of his wearisome toil, and *shall be satisfied*,” Isa. liii, 11 (Lowth’s translation.) The Redeemer estimated man as of unspeakable value. He regarded his recovery as worth all which he would endure in becoming incarnate, and dying on the cross. The glory which the ransomed sinner would have in heaven, and the honor thence resulting to the Savior, he deemed of sufficient worth to induce *him* to leave the heavens and to die. It is for the honor of Christ that we should feel and know that redemption is worth all which it has cost ; and that the scheme of recovery is one that is based on a just view of the relative importance of things. The price, indeed, was infinite. Silver, gold, diamonds, pearls, all the treasures of kings, do not furnish us with the means of estimating its value. The blood of patriots, of prophets, of martyrs, of confessors, scarcely furnishes us with the means of comparison by which to measure the worth of the blood shed by the Redeemer. Still we hold that the Redeemer sought a prize in the redemption of man worth all which it cost him, and which will “satisfy” him for all his humiliation and toils.

Do you ask what was that prize ? I reply, *It was the immortal soul*. Its value is estimated by the fact that man, so degraded, so sinful, so blind, so lost to his own interests, is IMMORTAL. Men see not this, nor feel it, for they *will* not be convinced that they are immortal, or that the soul is to have an infinite duration beyond the grave. Were you to be thrown into a dungeon on earth, to live and linger on *forever* in darkness, you would realize something of what constitutes immortality. If in that gloomy dungeon, nor father, nor mother, nor sister were to see you more ; if the

light of heaven were to greet you no more ; if sleep were to visit your eyes no more ; if harsh sounds and groans were to grate forever and ever on your ears ; if neither cord, nor pistol, nor assassin's hand, nor murderous vial could close your conscious being, you might form some idea of what it is to live forever and ever.

To be immortal ! The very moment you attach the idea of *immortality* to a thing, no matter how insignificant it may be otherwise, that moment you invest it with unspeakable importance. Nothing can be mean and unworthy of notice which is to exist forever. An eternal rock, an eternal tree, plant, river, would impress our minds with the idea of vast sublimity, and make us feel that we were contemplating an object of unspeakable moment. Affix, then, to it the idea of eternal consciousness, though of the lowest order, and the mind is overwhelmed. The little humming-bird that in a May morning poises itself over the opening honeysuckle in your garden, and which is fixed a moment and then is gone, is lovely to the eye, but we do not attach to it the idea of great importance in the scale of being. But attach to that now short-lived beautiful visitant of the garden the word IMMORTALITY—and you invest it at once with an unspeakable dignity. Let it be confined *forever* in a cage—or let it start off on rapid wing never to tire or faint beyond the orbit of Neptune, or where the comet flies, or where Sirius is fixed in the heavens, to continue its flight when the heavens shall vanish away, and though with most diminutive consciousness of being, you make it an object of the deepest interest. The little, lonely, fluttering, eternal wanderer ! The beautiful little bird on an undying wing, among the stars ! Who can track its way ? What shall we think of its solitariness and eternal homelessness ? What, then, shall we think of an immortal soul ? A soul to endure forever ! A soul to which is attached all that is meant by the word ETERNITY ! A soul capable of immortal happiness or pain ! My careless, thoughtless reader, that soul, immortal and eternal, is yours. You feel it not. I

was about to say you *know* it not. But Christ knew it, and felt it; and hence he came and died. The stamp, the seal of eternity is on you—and you must live forever. And is your redemption not *worth* his death—not worth more than all these material suns and stars?

Inseparably connected with man's immortality is the thought, that he may be a sufferer while that immortality endures. A *sufferer* is always a being of importance, no matter what may be the cause of his woes. That interest is in proportion to the tenderness of the ties which bind him to others, or to the benevolence of those by whom he is surrounded. Who is the object of deepest interest in the family? Who is the one around whom most anxieties cluster? Look on that little afflicted daughter. All are ready to do any thing for her; to carry her, to fan her, to bathe her temples, to watch with her during the long night. The reason is, simply, that she is a sufferer. She has now an importance, and attracts a degree of attention, which she could never have done had she lived in the enjoyment of health. Her pains, her sighs, her fading cheek, her sunken eye, exalt her into importance; and when she dies, you regard her as the most lovely of your children, and feel for the moment that you have laid your pride and your hopes in the grave.

It matters little—though I admit it does something—what is the *cause* of suffering, whether it be misfortune or guilt. The son that has been dissipated, and that lies on a bed of death as the result of his folly, is not out off from our sympathy by his crimes. And especially if he has been led into temptation by others; if by their arts he has been seduced from virtue, our interest is excited in his behalf, perhaps not less than if he were innocent. Rare is it, if it ever happens, that a *mother's* heart is cold and repellant toward a suffering daughter, though she has been frail, and led away by a seducer.

If suffering is long, or is likely to be long, the importance of the sufferer is proportionally increased. Attach the idea

of *eternal suffering* to any thing, and you at once exalt it into unspeakable magnitude. It matters not how insignificant the sufferer may be, the idea of its suffering *forever* gives it a magnitude which words can never express. That little beautiful humming-bird—suppose it—small as it is—transfixed with a tiny dart, and yet deathless; suppose the little arrow to pierce its heart, and the death-struggle to continue on till the heavens shall waste away and the earth be no more, and then that it be removed to a place where it would struggle on with the quivering dart fixed there forever—what would you not do to rescue such a sufferer? Tell me, ye rich and benevolent men, would you not give the last cent of your property to extract that tiny dart, and make that little beautiful being happy? What then is man, immortal man, if he is destined to eternal suffering unless redeemed? Why should we wonder that such a being becomes an object of interest in heaven; why that the angels regard him with emotion; why that the Redeemer came to die for him; why that God looks upon him with intensest feeling? No words can estimate the importance of man exposed to infinite suffering in the future world; and nothing but the fact that he is a sufferer here, and that he is in danger of eternal suffering in the world to come, is necessary to solve the question in the text: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?” How *could* a benevolent God but be mindful of one who might suffer forever?—*A. Barnes.*



SENTINELS OF THE SOUL.

“And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.” MARK XIII, 37.

THE camp has been chosen, the tents are pitched, and now night comes down on the wearied soldier. The drill, the march, or perhaps the fight has tried his powers of endurance; and right gladly does he lay himself down for

rest, to dream of dear ones left in his home, and of happy days in future. He feels secure, though the enemy may not be distant; he rests conscious that at least he shall not be taken unawares, and that even in the night attack he will be aroused in time to defend his country's honor.

What is it that thus assures and secures him? Were all asleep, how foolish would be the dream of safety; how soon might the enemy creep unawares on the defenseless host, to spread terror and death around! But all are not asleep. Yonder, beyond the line of camp, some are watching with ear open for the slightest sound, and musket ready to give the alarm. Further on, in the deep woods, another walks to repel with quick signal the approach of the foe. The pickets, guarding each road through night and day, in the cold rain or the fierce heat, defend their comrades' slumbers. They hold, as it were, the very lives of thousands in their watchfulness, and rightly the heaviest punishment is declared against the unfaithful. History embalms some of those who have laid down their lives rather than not perform their duty. What soldier-heart does not thrill at the story of the French captain who was surprised by the enemy on the outskirts of the camp? Surrounded by a hundred bayonets, deprived of his own arms, he thought only of his duty, gave but one shout, "The enemy are on us," and then fell dead among his infuriated foes. He saved the camp, but died a victim, so nobly performing what his position and duty required.

A camp without a sentinel, and in a hostile land! Can the soldier imagine any position more reckless, more rash than that? A commander who would thus expose himself would deserve defeat and disgrace. To warn against such foolishness would be hardly necessary in any warfare.

There is a different sort of conflict, where good and faithful watch is just as much called for. Every man in his own life has an enemy to fight and a guard to keep. That enemy is sin. It is a bitter and powerful foe. It would bring us all up to God's judgment with unpardoned guilt

upon us. It would keep a man away from loving Jesus Christ, and trusting in him, by which trust only, the Bible says, we can be saved. Acts iv, 12. When one is trying to serve God and to obey his dear Son, it strives to draw him away from his integrity, that he may break his resolution and pledge, and change his allegiance. It often surprises the soul, creeping on it unawares. The devil walketh about "seeking whom he may devour," and we are told to be "vigilant," that is, watchful. Woe to him who keeps no sentinels around the soul !

THE MORAL CHARACTER OF CHRIST.

"Which of you convinceth me of sin?" JOHN VIII, 46.

CHRIST explicitly and consciously declared himself possessed of supernatural power. That power embraced walking upon the sea, stilling the tempest, feeding companies of four or five thousand with a few loaves and fishes, and raising the dead. I proceed to inquire whether, from the moral character of Christ, it would, or would not have been a greater miracle than these that, in asserting himself to wield creative power, he *lied*.

It is, first of all, a remarkable circumstance, touching the moral character of Christ, that the testimony of thoughtful and earnest men, for nearly two thousand years, may be pronounced unanimous in its favor. The effect of the appearance of Christ in the world has been to impress mankind with an idea of transcendent purity. Skeptic after skeptic has glared into the character of Christ, searching for a flaw ; and skeptic after skeptic has recoiled with the confession that, whatever Christianity might be, this Jesus of Nazareth was honest and pure. No character known to history has been subjected to scrutiny so piercing as that of Jesus Christ ; and there is no character known to history, except his, of which moral perfection could for a moment be maintained. The proudest names in the annals of

philosophic morality are tarnished. Zeno preached a stoical virtue; Diogenes was cynically fierce against shams; but Zeno and Diogenes were personally immoral. Socrates is the loftiest and purest name of antiquity; but suspicions have in all ages been entertained in reference to the personal morals of Socrates, of a kind which never, even in imagination, darkened the figure of Christ. Aristotle and Plato were high-minded, in some sense spiritually-minded, men; but who does not know that if Plato and Aristotle were our moral guides, we should recede at once to something like a Mormon standard? Cato the elder was one of the most respectable of Roman moralists, but he rose not above the cast-iron type of Roman virtue. His goodness was a narrow, intense, implacable patriotism. His celebrated demand for the destruction of Carthage was inhumanly, fiendishly cruel, and his treatment of his slaves that of a man whose heart was stone. The best thing I ever heard of him is related by Horace—*mero caluisse virtutem*—that the repulsive old savage mellowed his virtue with wine. Mohammed was a sincere reformer; but the highest that can be said of him is, that in certain points he aimed at the Christian model, while in others he fell infinitely beneath it. The veneration with which several generations have regarded Luther and Calvin is profound; but what Protestant would declare the character of either to have been flawless? Space does not permit me to illustrate this point further, nor can it be considered necessary that I should do so. It is beyond doubt that no being has yet appeared in human form whom the suffrage of the race has pronounced so pure, so holy, as Jesus Christ. A beam of white radiance, pure as the light of God's throne, proceeds from his eye, falling along all succeeding ages. May we not ask whether men could have recognized this ray as so pure if there had mingled in it originally an emanation from the spirit of evil—a conscious deception, a lie? Every record, sacred and profane, which we have of this Jesus, declares him to have *said* that he could raise the dead.

It is of high practical importance to observe that there has been, in recent times, no change in the estimate formed of the character of Christ by earnest, thinking men, even though they have not accepted him as God's Messiah.

"If the life and death of Socrates," said Rousseau, "were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God." "The morality of the Gospel," said the same writer again, "and its general tone, were beyond the conception of the Jewish authors; and the history of Jesus Christ has marks of truth so palpable, so striking, and so perfectly inimitable, that its inventor would excite our admiration more than its hero."

With this has agreed the opinion of the greatest of those cotemporary or almost cotemporary thinkers who, if I must not call them infidels, would not permit me to call them Christian. Fichte, the noblest representative of recent pantheistic speculation in Germany, a man of superb intellectual vigor and impassioned devotion to truth and purity, bore Christ the highest testimony which it is possible for a German metaphysician to bear to any one—namely, pronounced Him an unconscious promulgator of the Fichtean philosophy. Jesus Christ, according to Fichte, was carried, by the mere purity and elevation of his character, into that region of transcendental and eternal morality to which a few other minds have risen only after long philosophic study and musing. He, a Jewish peasant, did, besides, says Fichte, more than all the philosophers in bringing heavenly morality into the hearts and homes of common men. The philosophers had sects and coteries; His followers were nations and generations. Fichte had that marvelous strength of wing in the open sky of speculation which characterizes the Germans; but his power was by no means so great in walking along the common earth and investigating plain facts. Had his practical capacity equaled his speculative power, he must have been brought to a dead halt by the question, How this Jesus, whose stainless moral character made him the representative of purified

humanity, could have falsely asserted that he had raised the dead, and fed five thousand on some morsels of bread and fish? Had Fichte fairly confronted this question, he might have passed beyond mere admiration for Christ's moral character to the exclamation, "My Lord and my God!"

Goethe was the universal genius of modern Germany, and is believed by many to have been the greatest man who has appeared in Europe for several centuries. He calls Christ "the Divine Man," "the Holy One," and represents him as the pattern, the perfect example, the model of humanity.

No thinker of the first order, since Goethe, has dissented from his estimate of Christ's moral character. Mr. Carlyle, his great follower in England, has always referred in terms of profound reverence to Christ. The life of the Savior is in his view a "perfect ideal poem." "The greatest of all heroes," he says, "is One whom we do not name here! Let sacred silence meditate that sacred matter." Deliberate lying on the part of Christ he would reject as a monstrous and inconceivable hypothesis.

Yet the only Christ known to history broadly, constantly, deliberately, asserted his power to heal the sick, cure the blind, raise the dead. If he did not *say* that he possessed this power, we may shut up the volume of history, since it can certify *no* fact; if he said it, can we imagine him to have said it falsely? If he said it truly, was he not, and is he not, the Son of God?

But, after all, the most important attestation to the moral excellence of Christ is to be found in the portrait of him presented in the evangelical histories.

It is, as we saw, a portrait artlessly drawn, with no parade of applausive adjective, no elaboration of exalting color. It is not a formal portrait at all. The disciples put down Christ's words as they remember them, his deeds as they witnessed them, and the result is the Jesus of the New Testament. What, then, do we find in the Christ of the

New Testament? I shall touch briefly upon the Gospel delineation, leaving readers to follow out the subject for themselves.

Christ's entire conception of his Messiahship, in the first place, is that of a moral and spiritual, not a material, work. There was nothing in the circumstances of his time or nation to lead him to this. The prevalent religious ideas were formal and external, and the subjection of the Jews to the Romans tended to throw into prominence the idea that the expected deliverer would be, like the old deliverers of the people, a man of war. But whatever Christ's hopes or intentions were, it is plain that he rested all upon *moral* renovation. The Sermon on the Mount, indubitably historical, places this forever beyond doubt. Through the innumerable obstructions and obscurations of the time, he penetrated to the central and eternal truth—that healing for a nation can only be of the soul, the conscience, the character. Take away the moral element of Christ's teaching, and what remains? The whole has vanished. False religions turn entirely on ceremonies and performances; his was spirit and truth—these and nothing else. The sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, apart from their moral significance, could attract no imagination. Can we conceive a teacher, whose doctrine was thus profoundly and pervasively moral, binding it up with a falsehood? The Jews looked for signs and wonders: true; but Christ confronted prejudices and prepossessions of the nation every whit as powerful as this, and why should he give way here alone? Miracles increased the power of his preaching: doubtless; but he could rebuke the vague longing to see a sign. If ever there was a teacher who would have dispensed with miracles *unless they were true*, that teacher was Christ Jesus.

In the second place, a distinctive characteristic of Christ's teaching is its insistence on sincerity. His words go always direct to the heart. The external action was to him but a sign. The chastity he requires is of the eye and

the soul; he reads the guilt of adultery in a glance. The love he values is not what cries Lord, Lord, but what wells from the secret places of the heart. The benevolence he extols is of the widow's mite, not of the trumpeted donation. Other teachers have smoothed all difficulties for proselytes, and have been severe upon sinners who were not among their own followers; Christ sent back the plausible mammon-worshiper who offered him allegiance, with a requirement, stern indeed, but no more than testing: "Sell all thou hast." Thy words are unexceptionable; thy intentions seem good; thy conscience accuses thee of no tolerated sin: "Sell all thou hast." Had the man's *heart* been *right*, he would have done it. But falsehood, of whose presence he appears to have lost consciousness, was lurking beneath all his plausibilities, and Christ went straight to *that*. The woman taken in adultery, on the other hand, he does not condemn. He sees only the foul hearts and sanctimonious faces of those who accuse her, and flashing the torch of conscience upon each, he sends them back in convicted dismay.

But why should the vain attempt be made to catalogue perfection, or to name the virtues of him in whom all virtues met? Of what moral excellence was he not a type? Surrounded by bitter enemies, he wept that they would not let him fold them under the wings of his love. Alone in the world—solitary in working out a mighty purpose, and in bearing an unspeakable sorrow—separated, even humanly speaking, by thousands of years, from sympathy and understanding—he never faltered in his patience, he never wavered in his long-suffering, he never flinched in his Divine fortitude. While none understood him, he perfectly understood all, he made allowance for all. Anger he felt, but it was visibly the anger of a God, the scorching flash of Divine holiness upon sin; anger for unkindness, for carelessness, for disrespect, to himself, never. When the traitor was coming with his band, and those who should have guarded him were asleep, there was no sterner rebuke than

"Could ye not watch with me one hour?" When Judas was already at hand, it was only, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." To love God supremely, to love one's neighbor as one's self—this was the rule he prescribed to his disciples, and his life was its absolute fulfillment. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" such was the testimony of God concerning him. "He hath done all things well;" such was the fond and wondering attestation by men that they could require no more of him. No vice that has a name can be thought of in connection with Jesus Christ. Ingenious malignity looks in vain for the faintest trace of self-seeking in his motives; sensuality shrinks abashed from his celestial purity; falsehood can leave no stain on him who is incarnate truth; injustice is forgotten beside his errorless equity; the very possibility of avarice is swallowed up in his benignity and love; the very idea of ambition is lost in his Divine wisdom and Divine self-abnegation.

And yet this Jesus, who defines the devil as "a liar," who has the clearest consciousness that a lie is the very essence of evil, tells the Jews that God the Father witnesses for him, the form of that witness being the mighty works done by him.

Were those mighty works a deception? Did the words in which Christ searched into motive and pierced the subtlest hypocrisy go like daggers through his own heart? That is the question. There is no evading it. History has heard of no Christ who was not a miracle-worker. Jews and disciples, Christians and infidels, Matthew and Luke, Celsus and Julian, all know Christ as one who constantly, and for years, declared himself able to raise the dead. Can human conception embrace the very thought that he was lying? No. The conscience and the intellect of the race start back appalled at the imagination of a miracle so stupendous. The crushing of all the stars into powder in one grasp of God's hand would not be such a miracle.—*Peter Boyne.*

THE BIBLE ATTRACTIVE TO HINDOOS.

"The darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light." ISAIAH LX, 2, 3.

THE Bible, says Major Davidson, of the British army, is to the Hindoos the most attractive of all our books. Its histories and illustrations have the clearest light thrown upon them by the customs and incidents of their every-day life. Indeed, in many respects they can understand the Bible better than we can. This fact was brought strikingly before me by an occurrence which came to my notice when I was living among them. An officer, engaged in the same work with myself, had occasion to take a long ride through a part of the country that had been rarely visited by Europeans. He halted at a village in order to escape the hottest hours of the day; and sitting down in the usual resting-place for travelers, the village temple, he entered into conversation with some of the villagers who happened to be there. The news soon spread that a *gora sahib*, or white gentleman, who spoke Marathee like a native, was sitting in the temple; and in a few minutes the whole village, men, women, and children, flocked to see and hear this wonder.

To their surprise, he not only conversed freely with them, but he could talk about all their processes of husbandry, knew the nature and peculiarities of the soil they cultivated, the tenures by which they held it, and, in short, was familiar with all the outs and ins of their village life. In the course of this conversation one of the natives asked him if he knew any thing about Yoosuph, which is the native name for Joseph. This surprised him; and the more so, when on further conversation he found that many of them were quite familiar with the history of that patriarch. On asking how they got this information, he found that one of their number, when on a visit to a different European station, had got possession of a tract entitled *The History of Joseph*. It was, in fact, a simple extract of the Bible nar-

rative translated into Marathee. Unable to read himself, he got the *koolkurnee*, or village clerk, to read it for him; and it was liked so much, that he and his fellow-ryots used to assemble in the evening by the village well, while the *koolkurnee* read and read again the inspired story of Joseph and his brethren. To them it was peculiarly interesting. They knew too well from their own sad experience what famines were. Within the precincts of their village were the *pekows*, or underground granaries, for storing grain against such emergencies; and they had, in the place of Pharaoh, the hard-hearted village corn-dealers, to dole out to them, at famine prices, just grain enough to keep them alive and to furnish seed for their fields. In spirit, the picture drawn by the inspired penman was one for which they might themselves have sat; and it is an interesting fact, that some of them stated their conviction that the God of Joseph was the only true God.

THE BOY ON THE ISLAND.

"He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him." PSALM XCI, 15.

A PARTY of pleasure, made up of a family and some select friends, put out in a small boat to an island a little distance from the coast. After staying a while there it was proposed to put out a short distance seaward. One young lady, however, preferred to remain on the island till they should return, the little son of the boatman volunteering to keep her company. After the boat had pushed off the two rambled about the island, picking berries till a dense fog settled on them, and they became alarmed for the safety of the party on the water, lest on nearing the land they should run aground; so, making their way to the beach, they waited, anxiously listening for the splash of the oar, or the sound of voices from the boat. The sudden falling and density of the fog had also warned the party outside, and anxious to get out of danger, and becoming also alarmed for the

safety of the young lady and her companion, they carefully made their way, as they supposed, toward the island. But after beating about for several hours, and the night overtaking them in still denser darkness, they were almost despairing, when they thought they heard the faint echoes of a childish voice calling something, as yet indistinctly. Listening intently the sound was more distinct, and at length the father's quick ear recognized the voice of his brave boy, and striking with rapid oar in the direction of the sound they heard at length the clearly-uttered sentence: "Steer this way, father! Steer this way, father!" And guided by his voice the father soon locked his lost boy in his arms, and the whole party rejoiced in timely deliverance from their peril.

A year or two since my wife and self set sail for England, desiring once more to see our old home and friends. We left behind, in New York, an only daughter, the darling of our lives and hearts. During our absence a letter came, saying our dear one had passed away. Bitter was the cup, and bitter it has been many an hour and day since. And yet, amid the dark fogs of affliction and bereavement, methinks I hear the voice of our angel-child calling from the battlements of the jasper walls,—"Steer this way, father! steer this way, father!" And following the well-known voice, I expect to lay down the oars of life and leap from my frail skiff to embrace her happy spirit on the shores of that glorious land where storms never rise, and fogs and darkness never fall, and where the "tears are wiped from off all faces."—*Rev. F. Bottome.*



AS YOU SO YOUR CHILD.

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works." TITUS II, 7.

WHATEVER you wish your child to be, be it yourself. If you wish your boy to be happy, sober, truthful, affectionate, honest, godly, be yourself all these. If you wish him to be lazy and sulky, untruthful, and a thief, and a drunkard, and

a swearer, be yourself all these. As the old cock crows, the young cock learns. You may, as a general rule, as soon expect to gather grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles, as get good, healthy, happy children from lazy, diseased, wicked parents.

Be always frank and open with the little ones. Make them trust you and tell you all their secrets. Make them feel at ease with you, and make *free* with them. There is no such good plaything for you and me as the *wee ones*. It is wonderful how they will not do when we do not do as we ought; just as wonderful what you can get out of them with a little coaxing and fun. A gentleman having led a company of children beyond their usual journey, they began to get weary, and all cried to him to carry them on his back, but because of their number he could not do this. "But," said he, "I'll get horses for us all;" then, cutting little switches from the thicket as ponies for them, and a great stick as a charger for himself, this put mettle in their little legs, and they rode cheerily home. So much for a little forethought and ingenious fun.

One thing, however poor you are, you can give your children, and that is your prayers; and they are, if real and humble, worth more than silver or gold—more than food and clothing, and have often brought from our Father who is in heaven, and hears our prayers, both money, and meat, and clothes, and all worldly good things. And there is one thing you can always teach your child: you may not yourself know how to read or write, and, therefore, you may not be able to teach your children how to do these things; you may not know the names of the stars or their geography, and may, therefore, not be able to tell them how far you are from the sun, or how big the moon is; nor be able to tell them the way to Jerusalem or London, but you may always be able to tell them who made the stars and numbered them, and you may tell them the road to heaven. You may always teach them to pray. Some weeks ago, I was taken out to see the mother of a little child. She was

very dangerously ill, and the nurse had left the child to come and help me. I went up to the nursery to get some hot water, and in the child's bed I saw something raised up. This was the little fellow under the bed-clothes, kneeling. I said, "What are you doing?" "I am praying to God to make mamma better."

God likes these little prayers and these little people—for of such is the kingdom of heaven. These are his little ones, his lambs, and he hears their cry; and it is enough if they only lisp their prayers. "Abba, Father," is all he needs; and our prayers are never so truly prayers as when they are most like children's in simplicity, in directness, in perfect fullness of reliance.

Go home, and when you see the little curly brows on their pillows, sound asleep, pour out a blessing on them, and ask our Savior to make them his; and never forget what we began with, that they came from God, and are going back to him, and let the light of eternity fall upon them as they lie asleep, and may you resolve to dedicate them and yourselves to Him who died for them and for us all, and who was once himself a little child, and who said that awful saying, "Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, it had been better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."—*John Brown, M. D., of Edinburgh.*



SANCTIFICATION A RESULT OF TRIAL.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 CORINTHIANS IV, 17.

THE Stoics taught that a man was wise and advanced toward perfection in proportion as he approached a state of profound apathy. The sum of man's duty with respect to himself was, in their opinion, to subdue his passions of joy, sorrow, hope, and fear. When Servius Sulpicius, the friend of the renowned Cicero, sought to comfort him in the death

of his beloved daughter Tullia, he asked, "Is it possible that a mind long exercised in calamities so truly severe should not become totally callous and indifferent to every event?"

How striking the contrast between this teaching of an undevout philosophy and the inspired injunctions of God's Word! "My brethren, count it all *joy* when ye fall into divers temptations." "Behold, we count them *happy* which endure." "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord." "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. *Rejoice*, and be *exceeding glad*."

When men heedlessly run into danger, or purposely bring upon themselves affliction, these blessed passages of inspiration are to them wholly inapplicable. If God chasten us, it is our high privilege "to rejoice," and in doing so we manifest the strength of our confidence in him; but if our flagellation be, like that of many heathen or Popish devotees, *self-inflicted*, it is arrant presumption to suppose that we have any reason for joy.

In the immediate endurance itself of any earthly affliction there can not, of course, be any element of joy. "Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous." The occasion for rejoicing is mainly in its final result: "Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

The sanctification of believers is, under God, promoted by their earthly trials; and this is the reason why in all the sorrows of life they are commanded to rejoice. "Falling tears wash the affections white;" heaving sighs break the power of earthly temptation; bodily pain strengthens our aspirations after heavenly happiness; and out of disappointed hopes, and from sick-beds and funerals, we come with our immortal strength renewed.

"All sorrow ought to be *homesickness*," says a German

poet. It ought to fill Christ's pilgrim band with longings after rest in his likeness and bosom. And does it not? Should we desire to find an eminent example of piety, would we not say, with the devout M'Cheyne, "Commend me to a bruised brother, a broken reed, a man of sorrows?" "Is it not upon those jewels that Christ especially esteems, and means to make most resplendent, that he hath his tools oftenest?"

The celebrated master of Rugby, Dr. Arnold, had a sister who was a confirmed invalid for twenty years. Upon her death, he thus portrayed her character, in a letter to Archbishop Whately: "I never saw a more perfect instance of the spirit 'of power and of love and of a sound mind;' intense love, almost to the annihilation of selfishness; a daily martyrdom for twenty years, during which she adhered to her early-formed resolution of never talking about herself; . . . enjoying every thing lovely, graceful, beautiful, high-minded, whether in God's works or man's, with the keenest relish; inheriting the earth to the very fullness of the promise, though never leaving her crib nor changing her posture; and preserved through the very valley of the shadow of death from all fear or impatience, or from every cloud of impaired reason which might mar the beauty of Christ's Spirit's glorious work. May God grant that I might come but within one hundred degrees of her place in glory!"

But how is this great work of the believer's sanctification advanced by earthly trials? In the same way that all life is made vigorous—by being measured against competition; by resistance; by standing up against a power that was seeking to destroy it; by wrestling with some antagonistic force. You see that tree yonder; it was a law of its being, impressed on the seed, that if left to itself it would steadily unfold its leaves and stretch out its branches. But *such* sturdiness and size it never could have attained in the enjoyment of a quiet and peaceful culture. It was the *fury of storms* that gave it its present gigantic proportions and

strength. Every blast of the tempest swaying its boughs loosened the soil in which it stood, and thus suffered its roots to thrust themselves deeper into the earth; while for every new tendril that clasped its tiny fibers around the broken soil, it lifted higher into the air its branches.

The human frame also, when free from disease, will grow to a *certain* fullness and stature. The child of luxury, doomed to a slothful life, may yet have a manly form, but in each muscle and limb there is a mightier energy, which *labor* alone can develop.

Thus is it even with national life. To become strong and vigorous, the discipline of occasional adversity seems to be essential. A people who, like Moab of old, are "at ease from their youth, remain settled on their lees, and are not emptied from vessel to vessel"—that is, enjoy unbroken prosperity and are shaken by no great overturnings—will, like Moab, retaining its old idolatry and barbarity, make no advancement in moral purity and excellence. China, for so many centuries a stranger to internal changes and convulsions, going on in the unbroken enjoyment of a certain kind of national prosperity, has now an effete civilization, and is absolutely hopeless as regards the promise of a regenerated future; "while England, four times conquered and three times deluged with civil war, converted, reformed, and re-reformed, has finally, from all these seeming disasters, emerged, in law, liberty, intelligence, and religion, one of the first and mightiest nations of the world."

The life of God in the soul, like all other life, is increased by being put forth, and strengthened by resistance. It does not reach its full maturity when nourished alone by prayer, meditation, and the reading of the Word. *Suffering*, in some of its many forms, must be introduced. The soul must have obstacles with which to contend, temptations to resist, and enemies with which to grapple and wrestle itself up into vigor.

Joseph's brethren, when feeding upon the abundance of Canaan, did not feel that they were sinners in selling him

into bondage. That unnatural crime was in their prosperity forgotten. But when, poor and friendless, they stood in the presence of a foreign king, trembling for their lives, it was remembered; and, despite the long interval between the sin and the sorrow, something constrained them in a moment to link the two together: "We are verily guilty concerning our brother." And how many afflicted souls are constrained to repeat for themselves a similar confession! Between physical suffering and moral evil, men instinctively feel that the connection is indissoluble.

When a man is in perfect health—his sinews knit in strength and his nerves all strung harmoniously—it is a very hard thing for him to believe that "his breath is in his nostrils," that "he is crushed before the moth," and that any moment his earthly tabernacle may be taken down. But let now sickness and sorrow come, and these truths are instantly realized. The man feels that he may be at the very threshold of the eternal Judge; and every motive of self-interest cries aloud to him for preparation.

A distinguished Christian scholar thus speaks of the influence upon his own mind of a severe and long-protracted illness: "Have you ever stood upon the banks of a mighty river, when its swollen waters were passing rapidly by, and watched the bubbles that successively rose and burst upon the agitated surface? They came up and vanished without noise, and to a cursory observer neither their appearance nor disappearance would have been noticed, so numerous were they upon the broad expanse. True, some of them were larger than others; but to an eye that took in the whole surface they all appeared small, nor did the bursting of the largest arrest for a moment the stream that bore them onward. A just emblem, this, of the stream of human society as it appears upon a bed of sickness. Men then perceive that they are but the bubbles on its surface, and that when they disappear the great current move on unaffected by the change."

How happy for us all would it be, if daily and hourly

we could realize that trial and sorrow are softeners and sanctifiers of our nature; that God designs in them we should be purer and holier!

“‘*I know*,’ is all the mourner saith:
Knowledge by suffering entereth,
And life is perfected by death;

I am content to touch the brink
 Of pain’s dark goblet, and I think
 My bitter drink a wholesome drink.

I am content to be so weak:
 Put strength into the words I speak,
 For I am strong in what I seek.

I am content to be so bare
 Before the archers! every-where
 My wounds being stroked by heavenly air.

‘Glory to God—to God!’ he saith:
Knowledge by suffering entereth,
And life is perfected by death.”



THE MOUNTAIN RIVULET.

“He that watereth shall be watered also himself.” PROVERBS XI, 25.

IF we give so much, is a common complaint, we shall exhaust our resources. Do n’t be afraid of that, my friend. See that little fountain yonder—away yonder in the distant mountain, shining like a thread of silver through the thick copse, and sparkling like a diamond in its healthful activity. It is hurrying on with tinkling feet to bear its tribute to the river. See, it passes a stagnant pool, and the pool hails it. Whither away, master streamlet? I am going to the river to bear this cup of water God has given me. Ah! you are very foolish for that; you’ll need it before the Summer is over. It has been a backward Spring, and we shall have a hot Summer to pay for it—you will dry up then. Well, says the streamlet, if I am to die so soon, I had better work while the day lasts. If I am likely to lose this treasure from the heat, I had better do good with it while I have it.

So, on it went, blessing and rejoicing in its course. The pool smiled complacently at its own superior foresight, and husbanded all its resources, letting not a drop steal away. Soon the Midsummer heat came down, and it fell upon the little stream. But the trees crowded to its brink and threw out their sheltering branches over it in the day of adversity, for it brought refreshment and life to them; and the sun peeped through the branches, and smiled complacently upon its dimpled face, and seemed to say, "It is not in my heart to harm you"—and the birds sipped its silver tide, and sung its praises; the flowers breathed their perfume upon its bosom; the beasts of the field loved to linger by its banks; the husbandman's eye sparkled with joy as he looked upon the line of verdant beauty that marked its course through his fields and meadows—and so on it went, blessing and blessed of all.

And where was the prudent pool? Alas! in its inglorious inactivity it grew sickly and pestilential. The beasts of the field put their lips to it, but turned away without drinking; the breeze stooped and kissed it by mistake, but caught the malaria in the contact, and carried the ague through the region, and the inhabitants caught it and had to move away, and at last the very frogs cast their venom upon it and deserted it, and Heaven, in mercy to man, smote it with a hotter breath and dried it up.

But did not the little stream exhaust itself? O no! God saw to that. It emptied its full cup into the river, and the river bore it on to the sea, and the sea welcomed it, and the sun smiled upon the sea, and the sea sent up its incense to greet the sun, and the clouds caught in their capacious bosoms the incense from the sea, and the winds, like waiting steeds, caught the chariots of the clouds and bore them away—away—to the very mountain that gave the little fountain birth, and there they tipped the brimming cup, and poured the grateful baptism down; and so God saw to it, that the little fountain, though it gave so fully and so freely, never ran dry. And if God so blessed the fountain, will

he not also bless you, my friends, if, “as ye have freely received, ye also freely give?” Be assured he will. Make the beginning.

THE STOLEN WATCH.

“He forgave their iniquity.” PSALM LXXVIII, 38.

DURING the campaign of the allied troops in Paris, a French citizen, who was returning from the country through the Champs Elysees, where the troops were encamped, was robbed of a watch by a sergeant in the British army. Complaint was immediately made to the commanding officer, and the troops were paraded before the Frenchman, who was thus enabled to single out the offender. A court martial was held, and the criminal condemned to die on the following morning. As early as 4 o'clock the whole of the allied army was assembled in the Bois de Boulogne, near Paris, where the prisoner was to undergo the sentence. The charge upon which he had been tried and convicted was read aloud, and the unfortunate man prepared to meet an offended Maker. Not a murmur ran through the ranks. The justice of the decree was acknowledged by every soldier; and if the short lapse of time between the offense and its solemn expiation excited feelings of terror, they were mingled with respect for the stern severity of their commander. The drums beat and the black flags waved mournfully in the air. The ministers of justice had raised the engines of destruction, and the word “Fire” was half ejaculated, when the Duke of Wellington rushed before their firelocks, and commanded a momentary pause, while he addressed the prisoner—“You have offended against the laws of God, of honor, and of virtue—the grave, sir, opens before you—in a few minutes your soul will appear before its Maker—your prosecutor complains of your sentence—the man whom you have robbed would plead for your life, and is horror-struck with the rapidity of your judgment. You are a soldier, you

have been brave, and, as report says, even virtuous. Speak boldly! in the face of heaven, as a soldier of an army devoted to virtue and good order, declare now your own feelings as to your own sentence."

"General," said the man, "retire, and let my comrades do their duty. When a soldier forgets his honor, life becomes disgraceful, and an immediate punishment is due as an example to the army—fire."

"You have spoken nobly," said the Duke, with a tear in his eye. "You have saved your life. How can I destroy a repentant sinner, whose words are of greater value to the troops than his death would be? Soldiers! bear this in mind, and may a sense of honor always deter you from infamy!"

The troops rent the air with huzzas, and the criminal fell prostrate before the Duke.



THAT HALF HOUR ALONE.

X "O that they were wise to consider their latter end!" DEUT. XXXII, 29.

THE lady who gives the following account of her first serious impressions, is now laboring for Christ in a distant land; and thousands of miles away from her New England home, she is diffusing the light and peace acquired in those half hours of solitary meditation and prayer.

"I entered the seminary—the Mount Holyoke Seminary, then under the care of the lamented Mary Lyon—a very gay and thoughtless girl. I expected I should have to become religious some time or other, in order to save my soul from destruction; but it was the last thing I desired to do, and I hoped for long, long years of enjoyment first.

"Among other regulations which were made known to us, we were informed that every pupil was required to spend half an hour in her own room alone each day. In compliance with this requisition, I entered my little apartment;

all was silent, solemn; I could almost hear the beating of my heart, and an unaccountable awe stole over my spirit. I could not trifle with or ridicule the regulation. I could not even spend the time in common reading. I tried to, but I dared not. Conscience lifted up her voice in that deep silence and made itself heard. It told me I ought to pray; and I felt as if the Almighty stood by me commanding me to pray, and listening to hear if I complied. And yet I had no desire to do it, my heart was cold and hard; I was distressed, but not melted—afraid but not penitent. Slowly the time wore away; I gazed out of the window on the noble range of mountains visible from that beautiful location, and beheld the glorious works of the great Creator; but while my heart kindled into poetic enthusiasm at the sight, I had no desire to become the child of that Divine and Holy Being; there was an opposition to the very idea rising up in my breast. At length the bell summoned me to the recitation-room, and I gladly fled from that dreary solitude.

“Day after day passed in a similar manner. I sometimes read a little in my Bible, but it did not interest me; yet I never *dared* read any thing else, so thoroughly was my conscience awakened. After some days it occurred to me what a wicked creature I was, to be thus unwilling to pray, and to seek Him who had done so much for me, and who alone could save my soul. I dwelt upon the thought and for several successive days a sense of guilt accumulated, till the burden was very heavy on my soul; and the first sincere prayer I offered in my lonely room, was wrung from me by a deep conviction of my sinfulness. Almost unconsciously, I cried, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’ And he was merciful. He heard my feeble cry, and before any one had spoken to me individually upon the subject of religion, I had been convinced of my great guilt, and my need of Jesus for a Savior. Much excellent instruction was given to the pupils generally, and when I began to cherish a faint, trembling hope that my

sins were forgiven, my class teacher one day asked if I hoped I was a Christian.

“The Principal afterward had a conversation with me, replete with sound practical wisdom. When I told her how I was first led to feel upon this subject, she said, ‘O yes, it is because we do not *think* that we are so unconcerned. It is Satan’s great device to keep souls from God, to occupy them so completely with other things, that they have no time or chance to *think*; when we think the Holy Spirit can gain entrance, and it leads us to see things as they are.’”

THE CLOUDS AND THE MOUNTAINS.

“King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.” ACTS XXVI, 27.

WELL do I remember the day when, for the first time, I caught a glimpse of the great Alps. My imagination had been excited to the highest pitch, in prospect of seeing an object with which were associated such wealth and grandeur of historic memories. We had reached the spot whence, as we were told, the long-wished-for view could be had. Unfortunately, a mass of clouds hung low and heavily in the east, obscuring the object on which we were so much intent. Meanwhile, the sun was bright in the west, and the sky elsewhere was clear and cloudless. Our impatient desire was that the sun might not sink beneath the horizon before the clouds had passed away from that object toward which every eye was bent with strained and earnest vision. At length the fixed and changeless character of the clouds themselves attracted remark, till by little and little the truth broke upon us that what we had mistaken for clouds were the mountains themselves, seventy miles distant, just as you have seen the white fleecy clouds in the blue Summer heaven, assuming castellated and mountainous shapes; and there the great and glorious Alps were lifting up their heads of snow and ice into the clear bosom of the sky. We saw

them ere we recognized them. Even so have we known many an honest and thoughtful inquirer after truth, straining every faculty of his mind as if in expectation of some great and exciting act or event, by which his conversion should be accomplished beyond a doubt, disappointed, perplexed, and confounded, at length coming to a perception of the *simplicity* of Christian faith, recognizing, at last, the reality of what he had long been tempted to overlook, and astonished to find that in his own bosom for which he had been gazing, as with a telescope, in the uttermost part of the heaven, and with suffused eye he exclaims, "Yea, Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief."

Beyond all doubt many a man has overlaid and stifled his own faith by not recognizing the importance of that which in itself is so simple, and easy, and common. *Even as it was when Jesus Christ came into the world*, men knew him not, and received him not; so is it with *that faith* which unites the soul of man unto God, it often springs into life so unobserved, so meekly, and modestly, that the very one in whose bosom it lives is the last to perceive its presence. He can not recognize what is Divine in human form. He can not be convinced that there is any thing important, any thing celestial, any thing eternal, in that sentiment of faith which now trembles in his bosom. But it is the infancy of life, it is the germ of immortality. Give it air. Nourish it. Exercise it. Strengthen it.

Take into your dark and desponding mind this great truth—Christ loves you, and desires your salvation. Let that belief work out its consistent expression in the life. Whoever believeth in his heart and confesseth with the mouth that Jesus is the Christ, *shall be saved*. Eden you have lost, but paradise you may secure! We know of no terms and no conditions for one which are not for all. Believe—repent—pray. Confide in God, your Savior. Obey him. Look to him in life and death. The last words of the Bible are a blessing: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." The last words which come down

from the city of God, ere the vision thereof was ended, are, "COME—WHOSOEVER HEARETH, WHOSOEVER IS ATHIRST, WHOSOEVER WILL, LET HIM COME."—*Rev. Wm. Adams, D. D.*

THE GRACEFUL GIVER.

"God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 CORINTHIANS IX, 7.

MACAULAY says of Charles I: "He bestowed much; yet he neither enjoyed the pleasure nor acquired the fame of beneficence. *He never gave spontaneously; but it was painful for him to refuse.*"

Is not this the way in which many still give? And even while they give liberally, yet it may be perfectly plain that they are destitute of a true liberality; they are still of a close, parsimonious spirit. But they can not refuse. They may be *ashamed* to refuse. Pride may *compel* them to give; or a stern sense of duty may wring the dollars out of them, as though they were their life-blood, with which they were painfully parting drop by drop.

"God loveth the *cheerful* giver." And so do men love the cheerful giver. Nobody loves the reluctant, backward, *compelled* giver. It robs the gift of its glory. It takes away the odor of its sweetness. It mars its beauty.

It is especially trying and painful to one who is attempting to raise money for some great and good object, to meet with such donors. *His* heart may be deeply enlisted; his sensibilities all profoundly stirred. The object seems dear to him. He doubts not it will appear so to every one else. He dwells upon it; rejoices over it; and makes it a constant subject of prayer. He devotes his time and his money cheerfully to it. It is not *his* matter, however, any more than any one's else. But it is a good cause. It needs aid. A few warm friends are struggling to carry it forward. He has cast his lot with them. He has felt the warm pulsations of their benevolent hearts. He has seen their self-denial, and their almost single-handed efforts. They need

more help. They wish to enlist a larger circle of friends, and draw from larger resources. He calls upon Mr. A., a man of considerable wealth and piety, for his countenance and aid. But how is his soul chilled and pained, as Mr. A. first exhausts a whole magazine of objections against the object, and another of excuses for not giving to it, before he doles out the amount, which it was perfectly understood beforehand on both sides he would and must bestow! He saw at a glance that he could not help giving to the cause; it would never do; he would lose caste. But he must divest the act of all its nobleness; rob it of all its truly-benevolent character, in the eyes of God and man; and then that which he intends for an act of benevolence does not deserve the name.

But how easy to impart to that same act quite another character! Indeed, how much *easier* to give gracefully, if one would only think so, and how much more the giver would be esteemed! And how much more sweetly the reflex influence of his act would flow back as a tide of joy over his own ennobled spirit! *Give*; but give also *cheerfully, willingly, gracefully*. Give so as to get the credit of giving. There *are* such spirits in the land; and they are among its noblest sons. They are known and read of all men. They are among the happiest of all men. They have their own reward.



THE VESSEL DRIVEN BACK.

"Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." JAMES V, 3.

It sometimes happens that a steam vessel in making the port of New York, is driven back to sea when within sight of port, and is kept out to sea till every bushel of coal is consumed. Then it becomes necessary to tear down the bulkheads of the vessel, and to burn up the doors and the

furniture even, so as to make steam with which to ride into harbor. What a sight is that steamer when, in the bay at anchor, she lies riddled, and ruined, and desolate in all its internal parts! Look at that man yonder who has been making effort after effort to reach his port—the port of happiness! He has been a money-getter for fifty years, and has been successful, and is determined now to enjoy life. Futile the effort! Every compartment of love and generosity within him has been cankered by avarice, and every noble impulse eaten up by his efforts to acquire wealth. He gets through business; he retires from active life; he sails into harbor, but sails in only with a miserable hulk. He has burnt up every thing sacred and valuable in reaching his long-coveted haven, and now has nothing on which he can rest himself for happiness. The very elements that alone could make him happy have been charred and burned up in his toil to obtain riches.

THE ROAD OF SOULS.

“O Lord, how manifold are thy works!” PSALM CIV, 24.

WE behold, as we gaze into the heavens, a gray belt, or river of light, encircling the spheres. The telescope resolves it into stars, which seem to lie thickly together, and are dots of light, with a hazy background, which, as the powers of the telescope are increased, breaks into stars. The Greeks called it the Milky Way, and imagined it to be composed of lacteal drops, which were wasted by Hercules, when an infant. The Indians of this land had a far more beautiful and poetic idea; with them, it was “*the Road of Souls*”—the path of the good—the bright way to paradise.

Notwithstanding the immense distance of the stars of the Milky Way, astronomers consider that the solar system, when related to Arcturus, Sirius, and other stars, is itself a part of this river of the universe. The bare idea amazes

us. We can not conceive of it. If it is such a measureless distance to our nearest neighbor, are all the stars, that numberless host which the telescope brings up from the depths, equally distant from each other? We can never hope to approach to an approximation of the distance. The human intellect finds in this an incomprehensible fact—not an idea—but a fact. It is powerless before space, unbounded space, as well as before unbounded time.

When we look upward to the Milky Way, we merely behold its edge. It extends outward, just as if the hoop of a barrel was an inch wide, but of immeasurable thickness, extending outward—outward, with no limit whatever. It is not a continuous hoop; it is broken and disjointed. It may best be compared to a river, with short turnings, and broken by islands.

Analogous to the Milky Way are the nebula—white patches of light upon the sky. It has been a favorite theory to suppose that the nebula were worlds in the process of formation. This speculation has been seized upon by disbelievers in Revelation, as authoritative against the Mosaic account of the creation. God had not rested from his labors, but was still at work creating worlds; but the completion of Lord Rosse's telescope has brought up from the inconceivable distances these masses of cloudy vapor, and behold! it is no longer vapor, but worlds—blazing suns, and systems of worlds. Some are egg-shaped; some spiral-shaped, as if rotation had commenced, and the light, fleecy matter was being drawn in, as, in a manufactory, we see the white cotton fibers drawn around a revolving center; some are of fantastic form, branching out in a thousand spangles; others, oblong; others, long, narrow ellipses, arrayed in overlapping layers; others, with triangular nuclei, or bright centers, with a surrounding nebulosity; others, elliptical, with bright nuclei in either end—sometimes double dots of light, and sometimes quadruple, resembling the centers of light, as seen through a globe of ground glass, in common lamps; others, long, narrow

strips of light, spread out like silver trappings; others, crowns and wreaths of light.

The resolution, or separation of nebula into stars, is the crowning glory of modern research and observation. It reveals the infinity of God. It annihilates the world-forming theory. There are nebula still unresolved, which defy all attempts at separation by the telescope of Lord Rosse, or the Cambridge and Pulkova refractors, but the fact that so many nebula have been resolved, is conclusive that those remaining would yield to higher telescopic powers.

We can have no conception of the immensity of space which these systems occupy. Light, traveling its two hundred thousand miles a second, has been thousands of years on its journey from those worlds. Rays which started before the creation of Adam have not yet reached us. Neither can we have any adequate conception of the immensity of those systems—those spirals of light. The orbit of Neptune has a diameter of six billion miles. If we could stretch a line of light across that immense orbit, *it would not be long enough to reach across the ring of nebula in the constellation Lyra.*

These assertions, so astounding, if they are comprehended, are sometimes received with distrust by those not familiar with astronomical science; for the intellect of man instinctively protests against receiving and adopting as truth that which it can not clearly comprehend; but an acquaintance with the science will dispel all doubts as to the correctness of the conclusions at which astronomers have arrived. We sometimes attempt to grasp eternity—to obtain some sensible idea of endless duration, but illustrate as we may, employing whatever figures that will extend the power of conception, we find that still beyond them is duration; and so, as we gaze at the heavens, ever increasing the penetrating power of our telescopes, we find that still beyond, God has suns and systems—worlds innumerable, which are “behind the veil.” Will they ever appear more clear to our longing gaze? Are we, in the future, to

advance, as we have done in the past, over other measureless fields of space, and behold the light of worlds which now exist in imagination only? Or have we exhausted the means which God has given us?

TAKE AWAY THE STUMBLING-BLOCKS.

"And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." MARK X, 13-16.

THERE is little Christianity in many Christian families, the parents being utterly faithless. Christian parents hope the best for their children when they shall grow up. They can not believe that they have been converted, but they think that they *may* be converted when they come to years of discretion. They are so negligent about their children in this regard, that when a child is fitted to unite with the Church of Christ, it is kept out till it is older, for fear that some mistake may be made.

Tender souls are born into a spiritual life, and the parents say, "I will not shelter them nor assist them yet: I will keep them outside of help and protection for two, or three, or five years; and then, if they hold out, I will bring them in and give them every encouragement." They will not need it then. They will be old enough to help themselves by that time. It is when they are children that they want watch, and care, and ward, and support.

When I have seen the way that we bring up our children, I have wondered that so many of them turn out well, in spite of the infelicity of parental teaching and example. How many parents indulge in a kind of cold inspection of their children! The child is beginning to try to pray and read the Bible. The parent, instead of being familiar, and

helpful, and genial toward the child, says, "If God has begun a work of grace in this child, he will continue it to the end." The parent watches to see if the child goes right, and says, "It may be so, but appearances are always deceptive. The child is struggling like a young vine to grow, and the parent stands like a marble statue by its side, and as it throws out its tendrils in its efforts to climb upon and uphold itself by the parent, they are chilled by the icy surface with which they come in contact, the parent meanwhile saying, "If God's grace is in this child's heart, it will be taken care of." God's grace wants instruments as much as any thing else. Agencies are required in religious things as much as in the natural world.

But that is not all. There is something worse still; and that is what I shall call, if I may be allowed the expression, the perpetual *snubbing* of their children by Christian parents. A child is made angry by some little thing, and the parent says, "Ah, Mary! you joined the Church last Sunday; a pretty Christian you are!" The mother may grow red in the face a dozen times a day, at some adult insult, without rebuke; but if the little child becomes excited, the parent turns upon it, as fierce as a lion, instead of going to it in kindness, as Christ would have done. He would have hid it in his robes, and hushed its little heart, and kissed the child into love; and then, when some calmness came back, he would have told the child what was wrong, and what was right, and the child would have loved him better for his rebuke forever after. How many parents watch their children as they are wavering this way or that, and chide them, or taunt them, and say, "You pretend to be a Christian, and are snatching your brother's apple! You pretend to be a Christian, and are perpetually doing disobedient things! I am ashamed of you, I wish I had never taken you into the Church." If there was no more sympathy in the Church than there is in these parents' hearts, I should wish so too. You must trust your children. You must be patient with them. Because their life is not always con-

sistent, you must not think that they are insincere, or that God's grace is not doing its work for them as really as for you. God is said to gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom. You must bear your children in your bosom; and you must do it in spiritual things as much as in things social and temporal. And if there is personal faithfulness on the part of parents in this matter, I am satisfied that children will grow up Christians from the morning of life, and make better Christians than they would if they were not converted till they had come to years of maturity.

Do you ask me how early I suppose children may be converted? You might as well ask me how early I suppose flowers blossom. There are thousands of varieties of flowers, some of which blossom at one time, and some at another. Some blossom, with the trailing arbutus, before the snow is gone; some later than that, with the hyacinth; some with the tulip; and some with the honeysuckle. There are flowers that blossom in every month of the year. Do you say, "How early may a child come to Christ?" Try him and see. If he comes when he is three years old, it is not too early; and if he comes then, do not say, "I can not believe it." Believe any thing that you see. When your child is but three years old, if you say some humorous thing and the child smiles, you believe that he understands what you say. If when your child is but three years old he hears music, and you see his lips trying to repeat some strain, and you find that he touches it here and there, you believe that. You believe that your child is old enough to sing, if you hear him singing. And if you see a little child that longs to pray, that weeps when it hears the story of Jesus, and that desires to be good, do not stand and doubt the reality of what is right before your eyes. And as to the time at which children may be converted, do not set any time. Some are riper at five years of age than others are at fifteen. Some can come into the kingdom of God at six, some at seven, and some at eight. All that you have to do

is to teach them, and lead them, and wait for them to blossom. If they blossom in March, bless God; if they blossom in April, bless God; and if they do not blossom till May, bless God. Take them, and be thankful, when they do blossom. Do not be impatient about those that develop late, and do not be in doubt about those that develop early. See what is the fact, and not what is your theory.

How much we have yet to learn! One would suppose that if there was any thing with regard to which we would be advanced in knowledge, it would be taking care of children. We have been having children ever since the world began, and yet there is nothing in which there is less transmitted knowledge, in which we make more mistakes, or in which we sin more, than in this very thing.

THE TRACT AND THE HAYMAKERS.

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether both shall be alike good." ECCLESIASTES XI, 6.

On one occasion, as Legh Richmond with the other passengers in the public conveyance were ascending the well-known Moncrieff Hill, near Perth, and left the coach to lighten the horses and enjoy the magnificent prospect, he began to give a tract to any wayfarer he might meet. One of his fellow-travelers smiled when he saw one of the tracts given treated contemptuously by the receiver, torn in two, and thrown down on the road.

"See how your tract has been used," said he; "there is one, at least, quite lost."

"I am not so sure of that," said Mr. Richmond; "at any rate the husbandman sows not the less that some of the seed may be trodden down."

When they turned round at the top of the hill to take another look at the prospect before mounting the coach, they saw distinctly the fate of the little tract. A puff of wind had carried it over a hedge into a hayfield, where a

number of haymakers were seen seated and listening to the said tract, which one of their number had found. He was observed carefully joining together the two parts which had been torn asunder, but were held together by a *thread*! The devil had done his work imperfectly; for instead of tearing the tract to tatters, his agent had left it still available for use, a little pains sufficing to make it legible. Thus the poor man who had torn the tract in two was the means of its being read by a whole band of haymakers, instead of by a single individual. But this was not all—the reader of the torn tract was led to reflection and prayer, and subsequently became an earnest Christian and tract-distributor himself. Of the company that were with him in the field, three became, within twelve months, diligent laborers in their neighborhood in behalf of the truth as it is in Christ.

FAIR-WEATHER CHRISTIANS.

“Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while.” MATT. XIII, 21.

CAPTAIN Speke, an English naval officer, tells a good story concerning the habits of some of the nations of the coast of Western Africa. In the course of his explorations the good Captain, commiserating the scanty apparel of his negro attendants, gave each of them a fine goat-skin mantle, thinking thereby to subserve the proprieties as well as to increase their comfort, and afford them a protection from the severe storms incident to that latitude. The simple natives were in ecstasies of delight at the gift, and strutted about in their new finery greatly to the amusement of the Captain, who reflected upon the fact, that now these poor people would have some protection from the chilling Autumnal rains. Things went on well for several days. The sun shone with tropical power, but the natives sweltered away bravely under their unwonted load of clothing, and seemed rapidly learning the habits and customs of civilized life. At length the expected storm arrived, and what was Captain

Speke's chagrin to see every one of his men, as soon as it began to sprinkle, take off their mantles, fold them up carefully, wrong side out, thrust them under their arms, and go about shivering in the rain!

Some people wear their religious profession very much in the same way. It is an excellent garment to look at. It does admirably in fair weather.

THE VOYAGE ENDED.

"The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." ISAIAH LI, 11.

DR. KANE thus alludes to the final return of his Arctic searching party to Upernavik, a Danish settlement of North Greenland: "A mist had settled down upon the islands which embayed us, and when it lifted we found ourselves rowing, in lazy time, under the shadow of Karkamof. Just then a familiar sound came to us over the water. We had often listened to the screeching of the gulls or the bark of the fox, and mistaken it for the 'Huk' of the Esquimaux; but this had about it an inflection not to be mistaken, for it died away in the familiar cadence of ■ 'halloo.'

"'Listen, Petersen! oars, men!'

"'What is it?' and he listened quietly at first, and then, trembling, said, in a half-whisper, 'Dannemarkers!'

"I remember this, the first tone of Christian voice which had greeted our return to the world. How we all stood up and peered into the distant nooks; and how the cry came to us again, just as, having seen nothing, we were doubting whether the whole was not ■ dream; and then how with long sweeps, the white-ash cracking under the spring of the rowers, we stood for the Cape whence the sound proceeded, and how nervously we scanned the green spots which our experience, grown now into instinct, told us would be the likely camping-ground of wayfarers.

"By and by, for we must have been pulling a good half hour," continues the Doctor, "the single mast of a small shallop showed itself; and Petersen, who had been very quiet and grave, burst out into an incoherent fit of crying, only relieved by broken exclamations of mingled Danish and English, 'Tis the Upernavik oil-boat! Fraulein Flaischer! Carlie Mossyn, the assistant cooper, must be on his road to Kingatok for blubber. The Mariane—the one annual ship—has come, and Carlie Mossyn——,' and here he did it all over again, gulping down his words and wringing his hands.

"It was Carlie Mossyn, sure enough. The quiet routine of a Danish settlement is the same year after year, and Petersen had hit upon the exact state of things. The Mariane was at Proven, and Carlie Mossyn had come up in the Fraulein Flaischer to get the year's supply of blubber from Kingatok. Then came queries and answers, in quick succession, about America and home, and then tears and shouts, and shouts and tears over and over again."

And thus, by and by, the Christian voyager will have passed the stormy seas of this world, and striking through the mists hanging over the abyss between time and eternity, his ear will catch strains from the New Jerusalem—voices once familiar on earth, but for years lost to his hearing. Then pulling into harbor the walls of the city of his rest will greet his view, and the river and the tree of life, all of which the Redeemer has promised him, if faithful to his trust.

"There all the ship's company meet,
Who sailed with the Savior beneath;
With shouting each other they greet,
And triumph o'er sorrow and death.

The voyage of life's at an end;
The mortal affliction is past;
The age that in heaven they spend,
Forever and ever shall last."

THE END.

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